0095

1411

RET's Sixth Annual
Worst Book of the Year Award

Joseph Adelson
Shrinking History

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR®

VOL. 14 JANUARY 1981 NO. 1

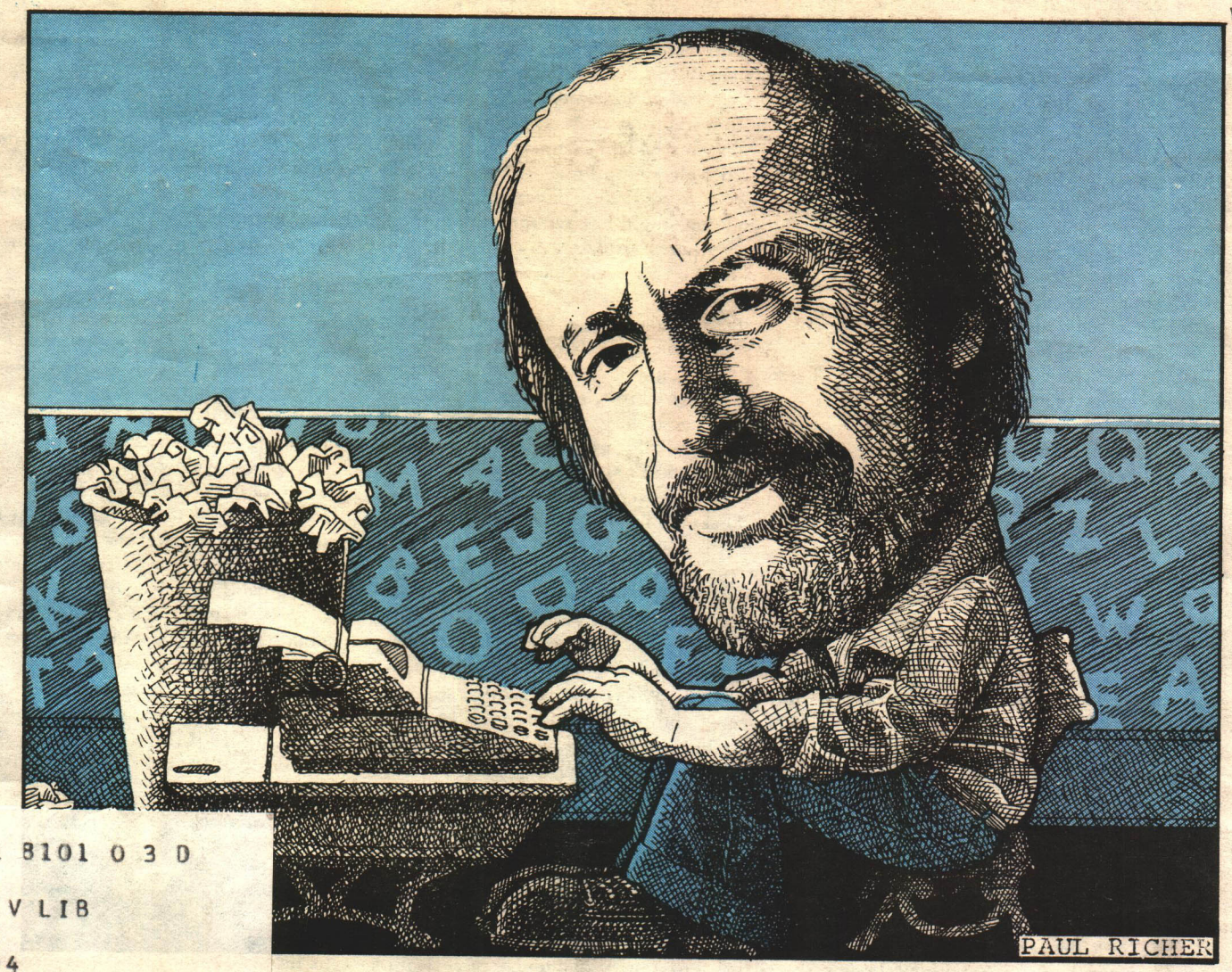
Stuart Koehl & Stephen Glick: Rapid Deployment

Tung Tung: People's Planned Parenthood

E.L. Doctorow, the Literary Grunt
by Bryan F. Griffin

LIBRARY
ST. EDWARD'S UNIVERSITY
3001 SOUTH CONGRESS
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78704

DEC 30 '80



STDW001-- 001 8101 0 3 D
EDWARD'S UNIV LIB
001 S CONGRESS
USTIN TX 78704

$1.25
FOR ONE COPY

01
74470 65520

A MONTHLY REVIEW
EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

$15.00
BY THE YEAR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE CONTINUING CRISIS

• November 6 to December 4, and in times like these the big office in the Kremlin can be a lonely place. The grave responsibilities that fall on the leader of the whole Marxist-Leninist world make him a man apart, and as this magazine goes to press the inscrutable Poles are behaving very rambunctiously, leaving Leonid I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, a man alone. One sees Tass releasing dramatic photographs of the great man pensively walking his hound in Gorky Park or framed in a Kremlin doorway, enhaloed in gentle light, brooding over the fiend Walesa and his trade unionists. For Papa Brezhnev to be up against labor is irony indeed. After all, he is recognized as a Hero of Socialist Labor almost annually.

• As things continue to smolder for his Marxist-Leninist custodians in Warsaw, does Papa Brezhnev beseech Divine guidance, as did, according to legend, our own President William McKinley before ending the Philippine Revolt of 1899? Doubtless there are Americans who find such loon speculations plausible. Forget not Cyrus Vance. When he presided over the State Department he was given to such moonshine as declaring that President Carter and the aforementioned Marxist-Leninist hold "similar dreams and aspirations about the most fundamental issues."

• The temptation to empathize chummily with our Soviet friends is almost a genetic defect in American statesmen. Late in November, Senator Charles Percy returned from a visit to Moscow where he presented himself as a hail-fellow-well-met to the agape Russians. Naturally he got into several "dreams and aspirations" palavers, the most memorable being with Defense Minister Dimitri Ustinov, "Conqueror of Afghanistan." There the Senator was overflowing with talk about future generations of Ustinovs and Percys living in mellow harmony. The Russians love to indulge in these sentimental orgies about future generations, and without garrulous Yankee pols around, the Soviets would not have many opportunities. But then the Percys of this world have never heard Russian tanks clanking through the night. Barring an act of God, the senior senator from Illinois will be chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

• On November 10, Michael Foot was elected Grand Howler of the British Labour Party, and in a gesture freighted with teleological symbolism, the people's bloke promptly broke his left foot. Also from London comes news that a government-appointed committee composed of judges, lawyers, and apparently a few sexual deviates, has recommended relaxation in laws prohibiting incestuous coitus, though sexual relations between man and wife are to be more closely policed. If the recommendations of the Criminal Law Revision Committee become law, the old boys will have an easier time of it copulating with their daughters and sons, but their wives will have greater opportunities to charge them with forcible entry. The redoubtable *Journal of the American Medical Association* has published a learned paper whose findings suggest that women, or for that matter men, who have silicone implants to enlarge their bosoms could experience an expansion of the bosom while aloft. Flying at 18,000 feet a patient's silicone implant could expand to twice normal size, and at 30,000 feet it could expand to three times normal size—assuming that the original implant had been made at sea level. Thus, air travelers with breast implants should always wear loose-fitting underwear while in flight, and they ought to have their implants in specially equipped airplanes. Two members of Mr. Stevie Wonder's chorale ensemble were roughed up in a Boston hotel, and mystery still surrounds that altercation between Mr. Dan Rather and a Chicago Taxi driver who took the TV sage on a frightening—but who can doubt, deserved—drive through downtown Chicago, during which he refused to drop Mr. Rather off at the home of Mr. Studs Terkel, Chicago's slob author. Mr. Rather ought to be thankful for the Cab driver's good sense. More than one visitor to Mr. Terkel's home has come away with tobacco juice splattered all over him and nothing but hogwash to show for the ordeal.

• On November 12 the National Conference of Catholic Bishops petitioned the Vatican for permission to revise the Roman Catholic Mass so that it might conform with the Lippincott *Handbook of Nonsexist Writing*. In San Francisco, California, entrepreneur Mr. Jay Stuart has begun charging clients 25 cents per three minutes during which they may verbally abuse him. Mr. Ronald L. Ziegler, formerly press secretary to President Richard M. Nixon, has been named president of the National Association of Truck Stop Operators, and Mr. T.Cullen Davis, the Texas millionaire, celebrated the anniversary of his acquittal on charges of attempted murder by throwing a party for the enlightened jurors. The use of religious hymns in Christmas pageants at Sioux Falls, South Dakota has been found to be okay by the United States Constitution, thus saving Sioux Falls pageant directors from having to confect ethical health cheers for the occasion.

• On November 14, a surrogate mother in Louisville, Kentucky gave birth to a baby boy and dutifully handed the merchandise over to its father. At Michigan State University in Lansing, Michigan, a group of consumerist-minded students, wearing masks, chef's hats, and aprons, heaved more than 25 pies into the dour smirkers of professors adjudged by their students to be boring or otherwise irritating; and the young activists intend to continue their good works as long as there are complaints, which ought to be good news for East Lansing's bakers. Famed New York University anthropologist Dr. John Buettner-Janusch was sentenced to five years in the hoosegow for conspiring to manufacture vast quantities of LSD, Quaaludes, and barbituates in his campus laboratory. And in culture news from Academe, Corinth Films is offering the nation's English Departments a modern adaption of Aeschylus' *The Eumenides* directed by Mr. Russ Meyer. According to Corinth Films, "the depiction of the Furies as killer go-go dancers may be considered as somewhat strange, but the interpretation is truly intriguing."

• On November 21, 83 people died in a fire at Las Vegas's MGM Grand Hotel, yet curiously as this goes to press, none of those who call for the closing of nuclear plants have called for the closing of Las Vegas's high-rise hotels. Amid violent protests from urban cyclists and their allies in the jogging corps New York City street repairmen tore up Manhattan's dangerous bicycling lanes. In Peking, the trial of Mr. Mao Tse-tung's widow Mrs. Jiang Qing and nine other radicals got under way after a 48-point indictment was read against them. There seems to be no doubt about the elderly revolutionary's guilt, but there apparently remains disagreement over how to dispose of her; some Chinese leaders favoring leniency, others desiring to make her into a kind of pâté. And from Concord, New Hampshire, Mr. Charles Barry, New Hampshire's fish and game director, is attributing a surge of moose-poaching in the area to, of all things, drug-smuggling. The enemies of the Age of Aquarius are indomitable.

• On November 22, the 17th anniversary of the death of fellow Massachusetts pol John F. Kennedy, John W. McCormack, once Speaker of the House of Representatives, died. Finally, hats off to feminist Wanda Brandstetter, Ph.D. Mrs. Brandstetter was fined $500 and ordered to do public service for offering an Illinois legislator a $1,000 bribe for his vote on the Equal Rights Amendment. Standing unbowed before a Springfield, Illinois courthouse, the 56-year-old feminist declared, "I stand here because the men of this nation have betrayed one-half of the human species, their own mothers included." I say let the U.S. Mint put Mrs. Brandstetter's mug on our $1,000 coins when inflation brings us to that denomination! —*RET*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR.

Editor-in-Chief:
R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.
Publisher:
Ronald E. Burr
Managing Editor:
Wladyslaw Pleszczynski
Business Manager:
William B. Head
Advertising Manager:
Susan C. France
Research Director:
Paul H. Vivian
Production Manager:
Jan Hoffman Sharkey
Circulation Manager:
Kathryn L. Baker
Business Office Secretary:
Linda S. Calkins
Editorial Intern:
Richard Starr
Staff:
Ann Moore Gutiérrez,
Elisabeth O'Lessker
Senior Editors:
A. Lawrence Chickering
Adam Meyerson
Karl O'Lessker
Art Advisor:
Sheila Wolfe
Washington Editor:
Tom Bethell
New York Editor:
Whit Stillman
Americana Editor:
Joseph P. Duggan
Chief Saloon Correspondent:
Douglas Bartholomew
Associates:
Robert Asahina,
Jameson G. Campaigne, Jr.,
John R. Coyne, Jr., Stephen Miller,
Alan Reynolds
Contributors:
Aram Bakshian, Jr.,
Christopher C. DeMuth, Terry Eastland,
Jerry Gerde, K.E. Grubbs, Jr., Neil Howe,
Roger Kaplan, A. James McAdams III,
Robert McTiernan, Judy Mathews,
William H. Nolte, Terry O'Rourke,
Marc F. Plattner, John Podhoretz,
Peter Rusthoven, Benjamin Stein
Legal Counsel:
Solitary, Poor, Nasty, Brutish & Short

The American Spectator was founded in 1924 by George Nathan and Truman Newberry over a cheap domestic ale in McSorley's Old Ale House. In 1967 the Saturday Evening Club took it over, rechristening it *The Alternative: An American Spectator;* but by November 1977 the word "alternative" had acquired such an esoteric fragrance that in order to discourage unsolicited manuscripts from florists, beauticians, and other creative types the Club reverted to the magazine's original name. *The American Spectator* is now published monthly at 102 West Sixth Street, Bloomington, Indiana. Second class postage paid at Bloomington, Indiana, and additional mailing offices.

A one-year subscription (12 issues) costs $15, outside the United States $17. Foreign air mail rates sent on request. All correspondence (manuscripts, subscriptions, threatening letters, federal grants, etc.) should be sent to *The American Spectator,* P.O. Box 1969, Bloomington, Indiana 47402, (812) 334-2715; New York office, (212) 724-3799. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by self-addressed stamped envelopes. ISSN 0148-8414.

Published remarkably without regard to sex, life-style, race, color, creed, or (most redundantly of all) national origin.

Copyright © *The American Spectator* 1981.

Volume 14, Number 1, January, 1981.

CONTENTS

Whoring After the New Thing.....Bryan F. Griffin 7
E.L. Doctorow and the Anxiety of Critical Reception.

One Baby for You, One Baby for Me .....Tung Tung 15
A story.

The Rapid Deployment Farce .....
.....Stuart L. Koehl and Stephen P. Glick 18
What can finesse 5 Soviet armored divisions, overcome 300 urban guerillas, and be home in time for supper?

The Transition Control Center .....John Nollson 21

DEPARTMENTS

The Continuing Crisis..... 2
Editorial / The Worst Book of the Year.....R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr. 4
Capitol Ideas / A Strange New Respect .....Tom Bethell 5
"Special" Correspondence..... 23
The Public Policy / An Even More Dismal Science.....Andy Stark 26
The Great American Saloon Series / Billy Goat's.....George Ertel 29
Current Wisdom .....Assorted Jackasses 38

BOOK REVIEWS

Shrinking History: On Freud and the Failure of Psychohistory, by David E. Stannard.....Joseph Adelson 31

The Winding Passage: Essays and Sociological Journeys 1960-1980, by Daniel Bell .....Arnold Beichman 33

Saul Bellow: Drumlin Woodchuck, by Mark Harris .....
.....John Podhoretz 34

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDITORIAL

THE WORST BOOK OF THE YEAR

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

THE J. GORDON COOGLER AWARD

Friendly Fascism: The New Face of Power in America
by Bertram Gross

Human Scale
by Kirkpatrick Sale

HONORABLE MENTION

Naming Names
by Victor Navasky

A People's History of the United States
by Howard Zinn

Have the eminent minds who dissect our time ever annotated and scrutinized the marvel that until very recently the great bulk of mankind's speculative thought was pretty much absorbed with aching feet, sore teeth, and allied miseries? I doubt that they have, and yet a pair of sore dogs is no trivial matter. Ask General Hannibal and his Carthaginians. Ask Rudolf Nureyev. With the advance of the podiatrist's science, with the passing of the old guard in dentistry —the executioner mentality departing, the dental-hygiene mentality stepping in—there has come about a dramatic change in the topics of popular thought. No more does the yokel puzzle and contemplate his swollen peddles. No longer can the quack make a killing by selling him a jar of foul-smelling ointment. Both have moved on to higher concerns.

Freed from the mundane miseries of his person, the yokel now often takes a college degree and settles down to a lifetime of worry over such matters as the imminent, irreversible poisoning of all life on this planet and the storm trooper potential inhering in the *Fortune 500*. Freed from confecting smelly ointments, the quack now sells the yokels propaganda to keep them anxious. Here is an astounding truth: Education spreads, science advances, medicine banishes infectious illness, and capitalism forks over the goods—nonetheless, as many yokels as ever live in terror. Quite possibly their angst is one of the eternal verities.

At any rate, today the quacks who prey on them are fully employed, ministering to lunatic anxieties of lush variety. They work with consumerist groups, ecologists, pacifists, members of the Democratic National Committee—wherever there are simpletons who have any doubts whatsoever about modern society, there you will find a host of quacks feverishly assuring them that madness, enslavement, and doom are our present condition and that things will get worse. These are the catastrophists. Today they prosper. Most have actually gained what passes for intellectual renown, though it is a renown that would have been impossible in days past when our system of higher education was not so vast and pervaded by hokum.

Hurrying across a wide range of intellectual disciplines, the catastrophists gather bogus facts and idiotic arguments to cut and paste into huge incondite books, which they then hawk to the hypochondriacs and neurotics of the land. Most of these dreadful books are prominently listed on college bibliographies where they amplify the fears of wimpy college boys and gals, and where they fortify the cleverer students' assumption that the teacher is an ass. In 1980 there were published two portentous tomes so prodigiously idiotic as to elicit the unprecedented recommendation from our distinguished panel of judges that both books share the coveted "J. Gordon Coogler Award"* for the Worst Book of the Year.

The first piece of catastrophist twaddle is Bertram Gross's *Friendly Fascism: The New Face of Power in America*. During the 40 or so years that this book gestated in Professor Gross's cerebrum, he and his liberal coconspirators were apparently fervently engaged in the construction of the Liberal *Paradiso*. He is proud to have been a "major architect" of the 1946 Employment Act and the 1978 Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Bill. Alack, now, with the Founding Fathers' edifice derelict and overgrown with such statist marijuana, the great architect has become unnerved. Without apologizing for the damage he has done or even acknowledging how the damage was achieved, he perceives that the American polity has become a scandalous *ménage à trois* of Big Government, Big Interests, and Big Business. He calls it "friendly fascism," for despite his high positions as Distinguished Professor of Public Policy and Planning at Hunter College and Professor of Political Science at City University of New York, he is also every inch the super salesman.

According to Professor Gross, there is an "emerging Big Business-Big Government partnership (that) has a global reach. It is rooted in Colossal transnational corporations and complexes that help knit together a 'Free World' on which the sun never sets. These are elements of a new despotism." And for some 400 pages he yammers along, gathering thousands of elements of Americana, trimming and embellishing them to accord with his *idée fixé:* friendly fascism.

Where are our Nuremberg Rallies? What is the uniform of our *fascisti?* Who is the *Duce?* When did the putsch get under way? Professor Gross is not telling, at least I do not recall his proffering these revelations. Truth be known, it is very difficult from his garrulous besotted spiel to recall any memorable passages, so quickly is one diatribe replaced by another—all equally replete with error and dizzying contradiction. Great haranguers like Hitler and Castro are noted for their ability to harangue on an essentially fallacious point for dozens of hours, but who recalls a line of their bilge? Professor Gross is in the same boat. He will be read by neurotics, but not even a fawning social scientist will ever be able to remember a line.

Here is *Tafel* music for maniacs. How did the fascists take over? Why do they not call themselves fascists? Are they happy? What is their next move? Is there anything we can do about them? Would the brethren in the Kremlin be of any help? The answers might be in this endless book. Then again, they might not. Perhaps I forgot. Perhaps I am trying to forget. *Friendly Fascism* is not a pleasurable reading experience.

Nor is Kirkpatrick Sale's *Human Scale,* our other prize-winning effort, a reader's delight. Yet, whereas Professor Gross, if he is right, has probably lit out for Albania or some other land beyond the CIA's grasp, Mr. Sale has merely called his opponents "giantists," people who advocate that all Americans wear size 13 EEE shoes, regardless of need.

Now this is not to say that giantists are very democratic or even very nice, but so far as I can judge from *Human Scale* they are not as political as friendly fascists. On the other

*Formerly "The Harold Robbins Award." We rename it this year "The J. Gordon Coogler Award" for obvious reasons. Coogler (1865-1901), the illustrious poetaster, an unintentional humorist, awed Americans for years with volume upon volume of *Purely Original Verse,* from which we pluck: "Alas! For the South, her books have grown fewer—/She never was much given to literature."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hand it seems that giantists are even more pervasive than the smiling *fascisti*. According to Mr. Sale's findings the giantists are behind

paperback books that fall apart during the first reading, home hair dryers whose plastic knobs and hooks break off, window shades that never go all the way back up, plastic "sponges" that disintegrate in a week, rotary can-openers that rip and slip, kitchen towel racks that snap off after a month, ballpoint pens that run dry the second time you use them, charcoal lighting fluid that flickers away in moments, flashlight batteries that never work, dresses with buttons that fall off after the first wearing, costly towels that shred after a few washings, and toy trains that are in pieces by the day after Christmas.

In other words they are everywhere—in giant corporations, giant bureaucracies, giant cities, giant buildings, everywhere. They ruin Christmas and love BIGNESS. One must even have edited Mr. Sale's book; it runs along like this for over 550 pages. Like *Friendly Fascism,* no element of Americana is left unused if it can be fitted into the author's idiot theme. Every page of *Human Scale* has a lunatic passage like the above. How any normal human being could read such a book and depart feeling informed I cannot say. It left me with a ringing in the ears.

Assuming for the moment that these men are sincere—and it is a difficult assumption to entertain—we have here two authors who see no validity in the present whatsoever. One believes that people live in large cities merely out of thoughtlessness. The other believes that 220 million Americans are the unsuspecting victims of a *coup d'état.* We have here either two nuts or two quacks.

I choose to think that they are quacks, though I shall not take issue with the charge that they are also nuts. More importantly, they are selling their propaganda to a multitude of inflamed half-wits. If our Coogler laureates and their customers have their way, popular thought will again be taken up with meditations on primitive miseries, for under them America would return to primitive times. Our laureates long for the times when yokels still lived under sod roofs, and, midst flies and staphylococci, waited for the dusty-foots. □

CAPITOL IDEAS

A STRANGE NEW RESPECT

by Tom Bethell

Federal budgeting now involves five-year projections, mark-up, spend-out, bipartisan chumminess, dawn-to-dusk staff meetings, concurrent resolutions, puzzled senators reading staff-prepared speeches that they only half understand, reflow estimates, outlay reestimates, aggregate targets, functional totals, and, finally, the reconciliation process. All this results in—what? A nice fat budget deficit: Once again the government has spent more than it takes in. Liberals then all join hands and sing in chorus: "The budget process must at all costs be preserved!" Conservatives rejoin with their lame response: "Balance the budget! Cut spending!"

Last week, as the Senate reconvened for its lame-duck session, budgetary deliberations were resumed after being so rudely interrupted by the election. I decided to observe the proceedings from a perch in the press gallery.

Budget figures come out in January nowadays. But these mean nothing any more, notwithstanding the massive and unrepeated press coverage of the moment. The figures are then revised steadily upward throughout the rest of the year, with a large chunk of spending packed in at the last minute to make the differential between the new year and the old seem smaller than it is. Fiscal year 1981 began on October 1, but here the Senate was on November 18 "reestimating" the '81 budget, as it will continue to do until next September.

The main actors on the floor were Senators Fritz Hollings of South Carolina, Henry Bellmon of Oklahoma, and next year's chairman of the Republican-controlled Senate Budget Committee, Pete Domenici of New Mexico.

According to any criterion you use, the so-called "budget process," enacted in 1974, has failed lamentably. The total deficit in the five years since its inception has been $300 billion—two and one-half times larger than in the five preceding years. Average inflation and unemployment rates have similarly risen. But somehow the "process" is everywhere extolled. For the allegedly adversary press, the budget process has become a touchstone of liberalism. (Consider, for example, a recent, baffling article in the *Washington Post* by Helen Dewar headlined "Hill's Budget Process Grows Stronger With Every Passing Deficit.") The budget processors use the language of stringency, austerity, and tough choices. But in practice, these choices are never made; instead, the process creates a rationale for everlasting and ever-enlarging deficits. Let us join the senators in their deliberations. Sen. Hollings has the floor:

The press gallery will soon see indignant news releases issued by righteous fiscal watchmen condemning their spendthrift colleagues for throwing the balanced budget away. We cannot pull out the props from under an economy that is expected to be in the early and fragile recovery stage in fiscal 1981. We cannot make billions of dollars of additional spending cuts when the cuttable cloth just is not there.

Hollings recommended a budget deficit for 1981 of "less than $18 billion." (Last April, it was zero.) This would "stick to the spending discipline and steady plan for continued restraint that will balance the budget as soon as it is practicable to do so," Hollings intoned, throwing in the comforting words "responsible and measured approach," and "fiscal responsibilities of this body." As for tax cuts, "until such spending restraint, provision in this budget for a tax cut would be premature." The Senate was advised to "exercise

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator*'s Washington editor and a Washington editor of* Harper's.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

patience" and "resist the call for snap judgements."

Someone at this juncture might have asked Hollings why, when the government spends our money, the economy is propped up better than when *we* spend our money. It is unlikely that he would have been able to give an answer that did not make explicit the Keynesian underpinnings of the budget process. Instead we heard from Sen. Bellmon, "a man of plain-spoken wisdom when it comes to budgets," according to Miss Dewar in the *Post*.

It is interesting to note that Bellmon came to Washington a believer in balanced budgets and fiscal conservatism, but was gradually, patiently, nudged to the left by the ethos of the capital, Ed Muskie's personal attention, the delegitimizing of some ideas by name-calling them uncompassionate, the legitimizing of others by dubbing them responsible, and the care and attention of the press. All this contributed to Bellmon's dawning perception that it was time to outgrow his "simplistic" beliefs of old and acknowledge at last that the folks in Washington were better at spending the people's money than the people were themselves.

There is a genre of Washington journalism which plays a role here—the *Strange New Respect* story: Conservative newcomers who are successfully herded to the left are described as being perceived now with a "strange new respect." Bellmon received this treatment. On the other hand, unbudgeable conservatives are called right-wingers and kept off party lists. A measure of social and intellectual ostracism can take its toll of the faint hearted. It is remarkable, incidentally (or perhaps not, come to think of it), that John Anderson's left turn since arriving in Washington was so widely construed as principle when it was so obviously a willingness to abandon principle as soon as it dawned on him—and his wife—that the social stakes were so high. In any event, Bellmon tacitly joined what I think of in my mind's eye as the Hickory Hill Club. This involves playing ball with the Kennedys. But in return everyone says you're a nice guy.

In his swan song, the retiring Bellmon responded to Hollings:

> Mr. President, I believe the Senator has made a remarkably good statement . . . I strongly believe that the successes the Congress has achieved through the budget process can be attributed, in part, to the unbiased, real and up-to-date budget information which has been included in budget resolutions . . . let there be no mistake—Congress and the country must have a budgeting process. Until now, the greatest strength of the process has been honesty and precision in a climate of bipartisan cooperation on the Senate side. It has been a surprisingly even-handed effort to control Federal spending and reach agreement on spending priorities in a world of insatiable and diverse wants. I greatly admire the fortitude and intelligence which Senator Muskie and now Senator Hollings have demonstrated as they chaired . . . "

His utterly fantastic statement—from which I reproduce only small excerpts—showed the extent to which Bellmon has been brainwashed in his twelve years in Washington. One wishes him a speedy and pleasant journey back to Oklahoma.

Next we heard from Domenici, who truthfully remarked that "spending is nearly out of control and that the basic laws of this land must be changed if we are once again to control the voracious appetite of the federal government."

Then Senator William Proxmire of Wisconsin popped up unexpectedly with an amendment, asking for its "immediate consideration." It read: "*on page* 2 *line* 16 *strike out* '$633,000,000,000' *and insert* '$615,000,000,000.' *On page* 2 *line* 22 *strike out* '$17,900,000,000' *and insert* '0.'"

Oh dear, here he was again with his naughty balanced-budget amendment, all set to embarrass everyone. "Mr. President," Proxmire said, "everyone talks about balancing the budget. Everyone talks about holding down spending. Everyone talks about fighting inflation. Let us do it! If ever we are going to balance the budget, we should do it now. Is that not right?"

Domenici (softly): "We surely should."

On Proxmire went while dismayed senators pondered ruefully, scratching their heads: "If we cannot balance the budget now, especially after the message from the election, we are never going to balance the budget. . . . The country has never spoken so overwhelmingly as they did in the election which was so surprising and shocking. We should get the message. Let us balance the budget. This amendment is going to do it. We will see who believes in balancing the budget and who does not."

Hollings fought back gallantly. "The temptation is great," he cried. "We are all for a balanced budget. The temptation is great to say, 'I accept the amendment.' . . . " BUT . . . (and here the Senate held its collective breath) "the amendment is irresponsible from the standpoint of *really* trying to balance the budget."

Irresponsible. Now there was a collective sigh of relief. And then Domenici came riding to the rescue, too. "I do not know how to tell the senator this," he said, "but his amendment is a joke. . . . "

A joke! The senators looked at Domenici with . . . *a strange new respect*. Perhaps he could be relied upon to keep things pretty much the same after all.

"Mr. President," Domenici continued, "I really do not want to make light of a serious proposal, but does anyone believe that, because a senator came down here and changed six or eight numbers in an amendment—a wish list, a cumulative wish list, just a whole bunch of billions he took out and put a new number in—does anyone really believe this is a serious approach to bringing government under control?"

Oh my goodness, whole armloads of new respect were flowing Domenici's way by now. He had actually fought back against a proposed budget cut by calling it "changing numbers!" Who would have had the nerve to try that?

"Mr. President," Proxmire replied, "how long can we accept these alibis? It is ridiculous to come in and say we cannot cut three percent from this budget. We know we can cut three percent. That is all I am asking." Interestingly, Proxmire, a liberal Democrat (of maverick disposition), then made the argument heard over and over again from conservative Republicans: If we are going to have tax cuts next year, we must make room for them with spending cuts this year. We will then have "earned" our tax cut.

"We have to start somewhere and sometime," Proxmire concluded. "This is the way to start and this is the time to start. This is the way for those who believe in holding down spending to put their money where their mouth is."

Domenici replied that he regretted opposing "this kind of paper cut the Senator from Wisconsin is recommending here, even though it is only a paper cut and a kind of wishful idea."

Domenici was already—so soon—sidling to the left. If it had only been a "paper cut," the senators would have voted for it and so received credit for supporting a balanced budget. The fact that they did not tells you that they knew it was a real cut, not a paper one at all.

Finally, Domenici asked for the yeas and nays. Seventy-two senators voted with Domenici, eighteen with Proxmire, and ten were absent.

As expected, the 72 included nearly all the Democrats (Boren, Nunn, and Zorinsky were exceptions), but also, perhaps more surprisingly, the following Republicans: Baker, Bellmon, Cochran, Cohen, Danforth, Dole, Durenberger, Garn, Goldwater, Hatfield, Hayakawa, Heinz, Kassebaum, McClure, Packwood, Percy, Schmitt, Simpson, Stafford, Stevens, Thurmond, Tower, Wallop, and Warner. It's worth reading that list over once or twice.

Last month I commented that some conservatives seem to imagine that we are going to be able to solve our economic problems by cutting federal spending. I then said that such people evidently do not read *The Congressional Record*. Now you know what I mean. It is not possible to cut spending in this country in anything other than cosmetic ways, and the reason is that it is considered irresponsible to do so. The supply-side tax-cutters have all along understood this political reality. So far, the "old-time religion" budget-balancers have not. But one day soon their eyes will be opened. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bryan F. Griffin

WHORING AFTER THE NEW THING

E.L. Doctorow and the Anxiety of Critical Reception.

"*Loon Lake** tells us about love and sex and money and desire," wept young Christopher Lehmann-Haupt of the *New York Times,* and the older boys and girls winked knowingly at one another. It had been a hard-fought battle, but Mr. Lehmann-Haupt had finally surrendered his innocence to a new novel by E.L. Doctorow, and things would never be the same again: "It tells us as much about ourselves as Theodore Dreiser did," sobbed the disillusioned lad, and nobody had the heart to ask the little chap to please speak for himself. Pop-philosopher Susan Sontag handed the boy a dry copy of the *New York Review of Books,* and tried to persuade him that she'd liked *Loon Lake* even more than he had: "the best American book *I* have read in several years," sniffed Ms. Sontag, just daring anybody to poke fun at her reading habits. A few overeducated louts started to do just that, and an embarrassing situation was only averted by the noisy arrival of some subsidiary philosophers from *Vogue* magazine, who began dancing around a fashionable little pot and insisting that Mr. Doctorow was "a magician." "His images haunt you," chanted the girls from *Vogue:* "words crash up against each other like loose atoms." The whole room seemed to be swaying: "You can never be sure what you saw," shrieked the literary dancers, "mind can hardly keep up with matter." Things were beginning to get a little scary, but just then the bell rang and everybody had to sit down in their assigned seats. *Publishers Weekly* muttered something about "a splendid achievement," and the *New York Review of Books* noted dutifully that Mr. Doctorow was "one of the bravest and most interesting of modern American novelists," but most of the real excitement seemed to be over. Everybody was just about to go back to sleep when the reviewer from *Time* magazine raised his hand and asked if he could get any extra credit for saying that "*Loon Lake* tantalizes long after it is ended." Suddenly the juices began to flow, and it was almost like old times. "Tantalizing," repeated Robert Towers of the *New York Times Book Review* thoughtfully. "Fascinating," he added somewhat tentatively, and everybody nodded. "E.L. Doctorow is an astonishing novelist," said Mr. Towers, a little louder now. There were scattered bursts of applause, and the speaker got to his feet. "Concentrically expanding ripples of implication," he said; "contemplative stasis, acquisitive action; Yin and Yang; duality contained within a circle." The tension in the literary community was almost palpable. By Jove, "the implications seem endless," roared Mr. Towers, and all hell broke loose. The implications were indeed endless, and the competition to produce the most sweeping statement about *Loon Lake* lasted far into the night.

In the end, it was left to Anthony Burgess to give the game away, and he did so in the pages of *Saturday Review.* Mr. Burgess was convinced that Mr. Doctorow was somehow "superior to most of his American fellow-novelists," not because Mr. Doctorow had anything particularly interesting to say, but because he was so darn good at "expanding the resources of the genre." Mr. Burgess didn't say for what purpose this thing was being done, but he didn't much care, either: "I am happy to learn that *Loon Lake* is already a popular book," he continued artlessly, "in that it is a Book of the Month Club choice and eighty-odd thousand copies have already been printed." Mr. Burgess was happy because "serious students of the novel" (for which read "Anthony Burgess") "must recognize here a bracing technical liberation," and—thank goodness—"such a recognition is being forced upon a readership probably happier with *Princess Daisy.*" The red-faced fellow tried to cover up his slip with some fast chatter about "epistemological agonies" and "convincing spacetime continua," but it was an awkward moment for all concerned: The unavoidable implication was that Anthony Burgess was only happy when readers were not, and for a minute it looked as though "serious students of the novel," like fans of *Princess Daisy,* might be far more interested in sales figures and "technical liberations" than in real books or genuine ideas.

If Matthew Arnold had been in the room he might have reminded Mr. Burgess that a serious man values ideas and reason above all else, "in and for themselves, irrespectively of the practical conveniences which their triumph may obtain for him" (or for anyone else). But then he would have gone on to point out that "the man who regards the possession of these practical conveniences as something sufficient in itself, something which compensates for the absence or surrender of the idea, of reason, is . . . a Philistine"; and Mr. Burgess wouldn't have liked that at all. In any event, Matthew Arnold was no longer around, and *Loon Lake*

*Random House $11.95.

Bryan F. Griffin is an essayist and writer of short fiction.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was, and there was excitement in the air.

To an unhappy visitor from the real world, the reason for all the excitement would not have been immediately apparent. Edgar Laurence Doctorow is not, after all, a particularly impressive figure, intellectually or otherwise. Lately he has been spending a lot of time giving interviews, and in those interviews he generally talks about "fictional renderings of experience," and "integrating fiction into people's lives," and that kind of thing—pretty standard stuff, in other words. Mr. Doctorow is pretty standard stuff in other ways as well: He has, in Alfred Kazin's phrase, "a nostalgic, deeply felt revulsion against capitalism," and so of course he also has long grey hair and a beard and a National Book Critics Circle Award. Like everybody else on the American literary campus, he likes to dress up in manly footgear and laborers' trousers and lovingly pressed, unbuttoned work shirts, and when it is time for photographs he appears in uniform and smiles quizzically at the cameras in a sardonic, working-class sort of way. He thinks that James Baldwin and Norman Mailer are great writers, and he publishes his own work in *Playboy* magazine. It is not necessarily a criticism of Mr. Doctorow to say that he does seem to be a bit of a type, or to suggest that he resembles, in many ways, the sort of lower-middlebrowed, middle-aged English teacher who is likely to write scatological political novels in his spare time. That's exactly what he is, as a matter of fact: a fifty-year-old English teacher who likes to write scatological political novels. Unfortunately, he is a teacher with a difference: In 1975, one of his novels accidentally turned into a particularly raucous Publishing Event, and some folks are still celebrating.

The saga of Edgar Doctorow is as representative as its hero. Like almost everybody else in the faculty lounge, Mr. Doctorow had long nursed visions of literary grandeur—"I thought of myself as a writer for many years before I wrote a thing"—but he was having trouble getting the critical horses excited, perhaps because of his insistence on "writing without knowing what you're going to write about." "One of my working principles," he explained recently, "is not to know too clearly or too objectively what I'm doing." This conviction constituted an apparently insurmountable obstacle to popular success until late in 1970, when Mr. Doctorow suddenly decided to revise an old manuscript about Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, the Americans who were executed in 1953 for conspiring to give atomic secrets to the Soviets. "Decided" may be too strong a word: "I sat down at the typewriter recklessly and irresponsibly, full of rage and frustration and despair, and just to do something, almost in mockery of the pretense of writing, I began to type something," Mr. Doctorow recalled a little while ago. "I didn't even know what it was."

Neither did anybody else, of course, but Mr. Doctorow's timing couldn't have been better: Nobody had published a mockery of the pretense of writing for several days, and there hadn't been a sympathetic book out about the Rosenbergs for more than a month. Mr. Doctorow arrived, so to speak, in an intellectual vacuum, and the consequences were predictable and instantaneous. Novelist Joyce Carol Oates, who also teaches English at Mr. Doctorow's college, let it be known that the Rosenberg book was "a nearly perfect piece of art." Under the circumstances, this must have come as something of a surprise to Mr. Doctorow, but he kept a straight face about it: "Write the book you find yourself writing," the nearly perfect artist told an interviewer, "and after it's done you look around for a rationale for it." Mr. Doctorow didn't have to look very far, either: The editors of *Contemporary Literary Criticism* were ready with the suggestion that his "major fictive concerns" might be "the cyclical nature of history and ways of knowing." This sounded pretty good to Mr. Doctorow, and he didn't make a peep when *Partisan Review* announced that the whole world was "in awe" of the way in which he "managed to handle historical figures fictively." The book was "a brilliant achievement," and "the best contemporary novel" the partisan reviewer had stumbled across in one heck of a long time. By the time it was all over, the Rosenberg novel had become, in the hushed words of movie critic Stanley Kauffmann, "the best American political novel in a generation," and it stayed that way for more than ten days, thus establishing a new record.

Now, Professor Doctorow may have been "reckless and irresponsible" when it came to writing books, but he knew a good thing when he saw one, and he scampered right back into his study to work up another big load of "rage and frustration and despair." But let him tell it in his own words: "I was in my study staring at the wall. So I started writing about the wall. It was in a house built in 1906. Then I started writing about the house itself. And I was off and running." Well, Mr. Doctorow typed and raged and despaired just as hard as he knew how, and after a little while he came out, grinning from ear to ear and carrying a big new book called *Ragtime*. It was this book that became the Publishing Event of 1975, and it was this book that really started all the trouble.

Ragtime was a typical example of the novel sans emphasis, which is to say that it was an example of the novel that seeks, or happens, to render all human experience meaningless simply by virtue of an aggressively monotonous prose style. In the stylistic sense—as distinct from the political sense—Doctorow's big novel relied for its impact upon two very old tricks (or three, if we are mean enough to count the inevitable presence of Dr. Freud and other "fictionalized" characters). The first gimmick is creaky but always effective: no punctuation, other than the period. As *many* periods as possible, please, particularly in the middle of what should be sentences, but nothing else.

The second gimmick is slightly more subtle in nature, but when handled properly, it can impart a grim and pseudo-ironic mood to every page in the book, and that's what we're after in this business. Not just to some pages, mind you: to *every* page. The way to do this is to drop any event of significance (particularly if it's violent, and it always is) right into the middle of a paragraph of unrelated trivia, so that the Awful Thing seems no more or less important than the everyday things which surround it. The dumping must be done more or less at random (chronology is definitely out), and if you're the sort of stick-in-the-mud who insists on cluttering up the book with any real development of character or plot, it's a good idea to conceal such development from the more persistent readers by tucking it away among a series of long paragraphs of detailed descriptions of supremely uninteresting localities. (It can be done the other way around, too: Trivia may be unloaded haphazardly onto non-trivia, but it's not quite so much fun that way, because it means you have to write out all that important stuff before you can get to the trivia.) It's all quite simple, really, almost as simple as unbuttoning the top buttons of your Bloomingdale's work shirt: First you put tape over the punctuation keys on your typewriter, and then you add a shot of the reliable old Sophisticated Irony, and before you know it, you too can turn out paragraphs positively pregnant with well-hidden significance and concentrated boredom. Just like Mr. Doctorow's:

> But we were in New York and we had no money. We needed money for a railroad ticket and for a gun. And that's when I put on embroidered underwear and walked 14th Street. An old man gave me two dollars and told me to go home. I borrowed the rest. But I would have done it if I

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had to. It was for the *attentat*. It was for Berkman and the revolution. I embraced him at the station. He planned to shoot Frick and take his own life at his trial. I ran after the departing train. We only had money for one ticket. He said only one person was needed for the job. He barged into Frick's office in Pittsburgh and shot the bastard three times. In the neck, in the shoulder. There was blood. Frick collapsed. Men ran in. They took the gun. He had a knife. He stabbed Frick in the leg. They took the knife. . .

And so forth, for two pages. The passage becomes even more awe-inspiring when we realize that it is intended to represent a monologue by the late Emma Goldman, who was, in real life, the author of such works as *The Social Significance of the Modern Drama,* which means that she was not a fundamental illiterate. But then, even the mildest attacks of literacy can prove fatal to a publishing event, and *Ragtime* was more than an event: It was the sum total of all human experience to date. It reminded the *Village Voice* of Dostoevsky, and of course it reminded *Newsweek* of *The Great Gatsby* (everything reminds *Newsweek* of *The Great Gatsby*). The *New York Review of Books* figured it was "a combination of Pynchon, Edward Gorey, and William Appleman Williams," and the *New Yorker* thought it was "not unlike Auden's 'Musée des Beaux Arts'" (which was odd, because Publishing Events usually remind the *New Yorker* of something by Céline). "*Ragtime* reminds *me* of Hart Crane's *The Bridge,*" grumbled Stanley Kauffmann, and the party was complete.

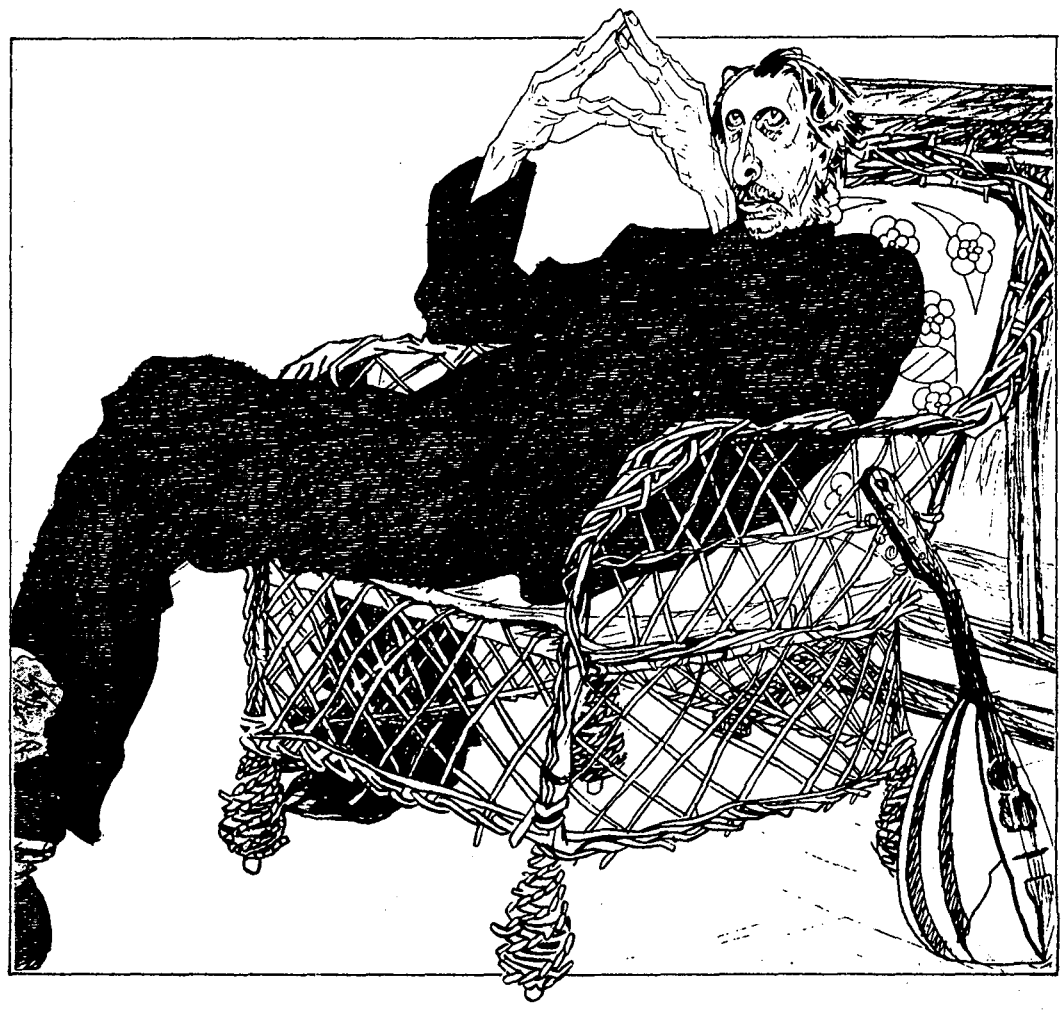
Critic Walter Knorr delivered the invocation: "Doctorow," said Mr. Knorr, "evokes in his readers an 'anxiety of critical reception,' a fear on our part that we might not be getting all of his signals, as if to balance off his own 'anxiety of influence.'" For some reason all of this anxiety made Mr. Knorr worry about "the value of literary scholarship," because, you see, such scholarship was really "a dismantling and reconstruction of an individual work within all of the possible modes of allusion: synchronic (contemporary), diachronic (historical), metachronic (archetypal), literary (imaginative variations of the archetypal), and non-literary (documentary)." By this time Mr. Knorr was almost in tears, but he didn't know how to stop: "the natural affinities among historical recurrences—to speak in Vico and Joyce's terms—are ultimately part of the rhetoric of fictional and biographical characterization," he whispered helplessly, "of a self's justification for its own vectors." An awed silence fell upon the room, and we all stared guiltily at our feet, trying to forget about our vectors, and not succeeding. "Nothing quite like it has ever been written," muttered Mr. Doctorow's blushing publishers, as they passed a note to the *New York Review of Books*. "No one has written a book quite like it," confirmed the *Review,* crumpling up the note. The *New York Times Book Review* tried to keep things going by saying that Mr. Doctorow's sentences were "the verbal equivalent of ragtime." "Plink a plink," said the *Times*. "Plink a plink, a-plink-plink, a-plink-plink." Everybody got the giggles, and the big Event was adjourned until the following week.

It's true that trick novelists tend to attract trick reviewers. But if certain boys and girls in the back row were making fools of themselves, it wasn't entirely the fault of Mr. Doctorow. To be sure, *Ragtime* wasn't a particularly good book—but then, its author had never pretended that it was. On the contrary, he had taken pains to persuade all his friends that he'd really wanted his Event to appeal to semi-educated, "working-class" people: He didn't like literary elitism, he said, and he was eager to restore the "popular interest" in fiction (or anyway, in Edgar Doctorow's fiction). Concluding on a rather bizarre note, the man of the people explained that he wanted his book to be "accessible" to gas station attendants. This caused a brief flurry of confusion in the American petroleum industry, but it turned out to be an empty threat, and calm was soon restored to the pumping stations.

In any case, Mr. Doctorow's slightly strained cover story had been forgotten by the end of 1980, and all that remained was the vague memory of past days of glory. Doctorow. *Ragtime*. Publishing Events. The very words summoned up images of the Golden Age, and once more the cry went up: Find Doctorow. Doctorow did it before and he can do it again. Find Doctorow, and praise him, and all may yet be as it was on the campus of Philistia.

And so the wise men went to find Doctorow; and lo, when they saw him he carried in his arms a big new book, and it was a scatological novel of politics called *Loon Lake,* and it was good. It was more than good, it was fine, as fine as *War and Peace*. It was better than *War and Peace* . . . it was the best book anyone had ever written . . . it was . . . it was better than *Ragtime*! Why, it was so good that some people knew it was good even before they'd had a chance to look at it: The *Washington Star,* for instance, somehow guessed back in the middle of the summer that *Loon Lake* would be "September's leading fiction title." And a month before they'd even assigned the book for review, the literary astrologers from the *Washington Post* just *knew* that *Loon Lake* would turn out to be "dazzling." Also "skillful," and "alive with passion, brutality, power, violence and corrupting success," which are all good things to be alive with, over at the *Post*. Outsiders observed that Mr. Doctorow was already scheduled to hype his forthcoming novel at a $10-a-ticket "*Washington Post* Book and Author Luncheon" to be held in October, and those same twisted souls were still making snide remarks when the *Post* proceeded to feature not one, or two, but three adoring articles about the author of *Loon Lake*. Which just goes to show how cynical some people can be when it comes to art.

Still, nobody was too terribly surprised when the *Post* finally got around to reviewing the book and discovered that it was just as dazzling as the paper had been predicting. It was an occasion for dancing in the streets, because *Loon Lake* was,



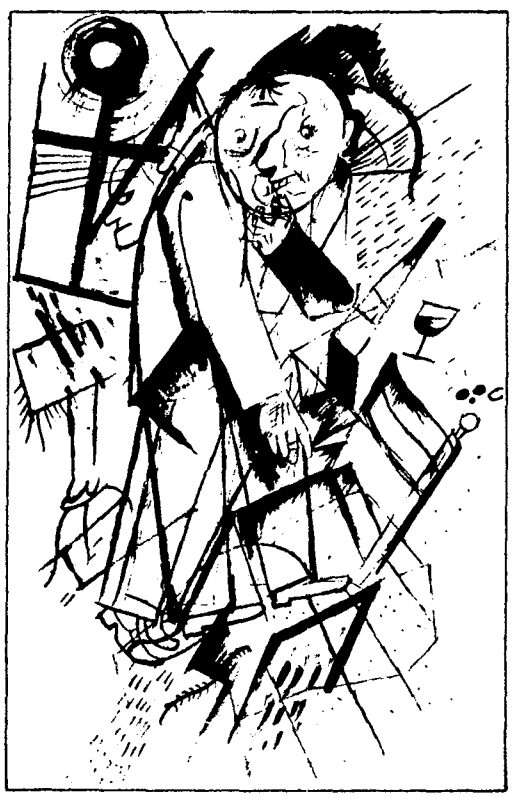
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

among other things, "an odd cross" between *The Grapes of Wrath* and—you guessed it—*The Great Gatsby*. "A comparison with *Moby Dick* may seem excessive," said the *Post*'s determined reviewer, "but that's the league Doctorow is playing in." Oh, sure, there were a few un-Melville-like flaws, but on the whole the book was "one verbally dazzling solo performance after another," because Mr. Doctorow was "one of the most courageous and interesting writers around," and it was hard to imagine him writing *anything* "lacking in courage and interest." Nobody could figure out what all that courage had to do with anything, but the *New York Review of Books* had already ruled that Mr. Doctorow was indeed "one of the bravest and most interesting of modern American novelists," and it would have been tacky to ask too many questions.

The Washington papers were joined in their astonishing prescience by the editors of the *Nation,* who predicted that current thinking about "the tools of contemporary political repression" would be "enriched by the forthcoming publication of an important new work of the literary imagination, E.L. Doctorow's *Loon Lake.*" As a matter of fact, the editors were so high on Mr. Doctorow that they asked him to write an analysis of the moral character of Ronald Reagan. Mr. Doctorow did so with characteristic gusto, revealing, among other things, that it was only after the end of the Second World War that "Reagan's life began to attach to the nonfictive structure of things." Nobody was quite sure what that meant, but it sounded awfully sexy, and so a few weeks later the *Nation* decided to print an entire fictive chapter from *Loon Lake,* which was a pretty big step for all concerned: "As far as we can determine," said the editors, "*The Nation* has never published an excerpt from a novel." There was an awed silence which threatened to become embarrassing until the fellows remembered to explain that Mr. Doctorow "transmuted emanations of historical events into novelistic meditations," which meant that he wrote leftist political novels. Everybody glanced at the excerpt and nodded politely and tried to move on to other things, but the editor of the *Nation* was waiting for them in the pages of the *New York Times Book Review,* where he was interviewing . . . E.L. Doctorow. People were beginning to get a bit annoyed, especially when Mr. Doctorow started talking about "accomodating the complexity of fiction, which as a mode of thought is intuitive, metaphysical, mythic." The editor of the *Nation* kept pestering him about *Loon Lake,* and Mr. Doctorow finally got mad and said that his book was "discontinuous and mind-blowing." "The convention of the consistent, identifiable narrative is one of the last conventions that can be assaulted," said Mr. Doctorow, and he was pretty damn sure he'd assaulted it: Hell, "I think it has now been torpedoed," guffawed the talkative fellow, who added that he'd also torpedoed "the basic compact between narrator and reader." "Here you don't know who's talking so that's one more convention out the window," explained Mr. Doctorow; "that gives me pleasure."

One man's pleasure can easily be another man's boredom, and by this time people were getting pretty sick of the rather peculiar arrangement between the *Nation* and Mr. Doctorow. The editors of the paper finally crossed the line when they printed a two-page tribute to *Loon Lake* by still another English teacher. This one had the feeling that the Doctorow style was "like a chorus of the blues played by Dizzy Gillespie," and he was especially hard hit by certain enchanting passages written "in a kind of semilyric computerese." "A tone, a mood, an atmosphere, a texture, a poetry, a felt and meditated vision of how things go with us," hummed the *Nation*'s reviewer, which is Critic Talk for "I can't think of the word I want, but by Gosh this a favorable review." It wasn't exactly a new tune (five years earlier the same teacher had been saying that *Ragtime* was "cool, hard, controlled," and "all we could ask for in the way of texture, mood, character and despair"), but this time the gang had gone too far: Someone finally looked at the small print and discovered that Mr. Doctorow was . . . an editorial advisor to the *Nation*. And suddenly there was a kind of light.

Loon Lake itself is not a particularly interesting novel. It is poorly written, and hardly structured, but there is nothing especially new or shocking in its awfulness. It is, to be sure, a determinedly squalid book (much more so than *Ragtime*), but it is surprisingly old-fashioned in its squalor: Mr. Doctorow is one of those timid American male writers who is afraid to use a grown-up word where a four-letter one will do, and if the result is undeniably sleazy, it is also undeniably stale—much more likely to elicit a surreptitious yawn than a disciplinary grimace. "You travel from orgasm to political organization along an arbitrary morpheme," says Anthony Burgess, perhaps disapprovingly. "It is Doctorow's way." It was also everybody else's way, about 15 years ago, and unfortunately for Mr. Doctorow, there are no new sights to be pointed out during the hike: *Loon Lake* is merely one more in a thinning line of "grotesque socio-erotic epics," and as such it is—we hate to say it—more than a little old hat.



Like all excessively familiar objects, it is rather difficult to describe. There is no attempt at historical, narrative, or psychological coherence, and accordingly there is no real plot (which is perhaps just as well). There are, however, periodic references to the melodramatic adventures of a boy named Joe, who runs away from home to visit the Great Depression. Alas, Joe, like his creator, is a rather dull and ill-educated boy:

> I climbed firescapes and watched old women struggle into their corsets, I joined a gang and carried a penknife I had sharpened like an Arab, like a Dago, I stuck it in the vegetable peddler's horse, I stuck it in a feeb with a watermelon head, I slit awnings with it, I played peg with it, I robbed little kids with it, I took a girl on the roof with it and got her to take off her clothes with it,

and so on. Some people pretend to enjoy this kind of thing—it has "hypnotic force," if you work at *Time* magazine—and Mr. Doctorow can turn the stuff out by the yard, when he's in the mood, and he always is. Well, our Joe has problems of an intimate nature ("alone at night in the spread of warmth waking to the warm pool of undeniable satisfaction p----d from my infant c--k into the flat world of the sheet and only when it turned cold and chafed my thighs did I admit to being awake, mama, oh mama"), and he also suffers from religious doubts, which come to a head one afternoon as he is, in his boyish way, robbing the church poorbox: "God the Father the Son and That Other One really p-----g them off with my existence I twist turn kick the Father has b---s they don't cut off their own b-- s they don't go that far the son of a bitch—spungo!" Joe is able to resolve his doubts by discussing them with a friendly clergyman—"red apoplectic face I know the feeling Father but you're no father of mine he is on his hands and knees on the stone he is gasping for breath You want your money I scream take your f--king money"—but the experience marks him for the next 252 pages as a boy without punctuation. (The experience also did something funny to Michael Kernan of the *Washington Post,* who received the Unmitigated Gall Award for saying that "the sentences are clean and tight, even if they don't have any commas in them, and sometimes no periods.")

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Eventually Joe joins a carnival to find those parts of himself which he has not already found, but his studies are soon interrupted by a party of unenlightened workingmen who proceed to rape and then murder the carnival's Fat Lady. This makes Joe very angry, in a symbolic sort of way: "I felt betrayed by her, as by life itself, the human pretense. I became enraged with her! In my nostrils, mixed with the sharp fume of booze, was an organic stench, a bitter foul smell of burning nerves, and s--t and scum." Momentarily distracted by the unexpected presence of so many commas, the lad catches a glimpse of a naked girl whizzing by in a private train (an extremely common sight during the Great Depression) and takes off in hot pursuit. Naturally he winds up on the enormous estate of a millionaire oppressor of the workers, where he is set upon and almost eaten by a pack of wild and presumably capitalistic dogs, and then—*please* sit still, this is very serious—then he runs into a union-busting gangster named Crapo and his lovely and talented gun moll Clara, who take turns teaching him how to oppress workers. He also meets an alcoholic expert in Oriental religions who wants to murder the millionaire oppressor, and since the expert is also a poet, the happy encounter gives Mr. Doctorow an opportunity to unload some of his unused words, which he is only too happy to do:

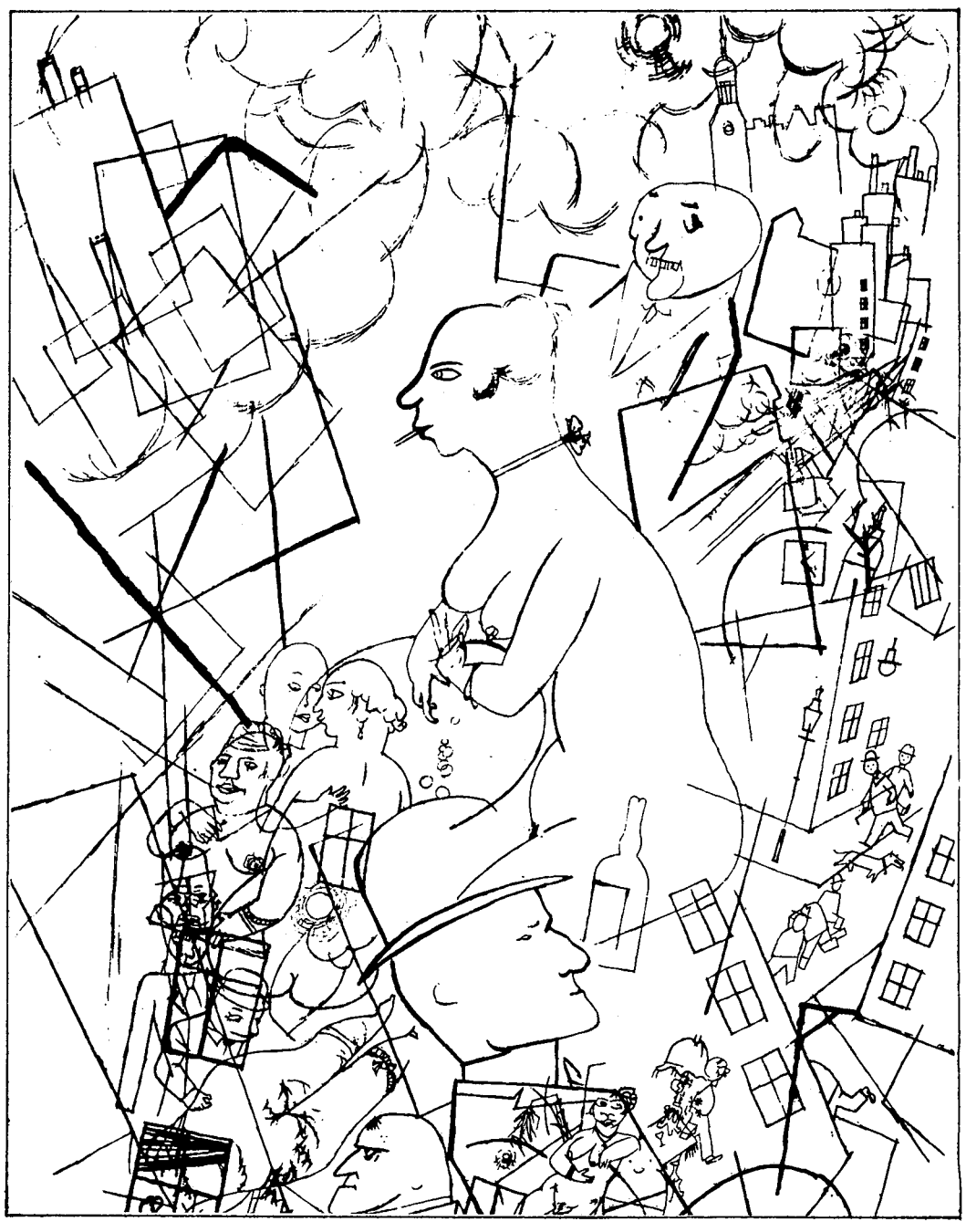
Come with me
Compute with me
Computerized she prints out me
Commingling with me she becomes me
Coming she is coming is she
Coming she is a comrade of mine
Comrades come all over comrades
Communists come upon communists
Hi. Hi.

By an astonishing coincidence, the poet was also once attacked by a pack of wild dogs, just like Joe! The two have other things in common as well: They were both fascinated, as young boys, by the sight of little girls urinating, and they both have exactly the same prose style. (If Robert Towers of the *Times* was willing to admit that the alcoholic Orientalist was "a singularly undistinguished poet," that was all he was willing to admit: "Whether Doctorow intended him to be so is not clear," said Mr. Towers, shutting his eyes tight and pretending it was too dark to see anything.) Presumably Mr. Doctorow's characters would like to talk with one another about all the piles of accumulated symbolism, but things are just too hectic: A female aviator who looks a lot like Amelia Earhart keeps landing and taking off from the estate in her hydroplane (her search for "higher altitudes" corresponds to the poet's search for "the ineffable in Zen," according to Towers of the *Times*), and Joe himself has to steal a Mercedes and rescue the gun moll and get a job in an auto plant so that he can organize the workers to bring social democracy to the Adirondacks. "Doctorow *is* a storyteller, a mythmaker," wails *Newsweek,* sounding just a bit desperate about the whole thing. The mythmaker is also a terribly sensitive fellow, of course, and he gets a chance to exhibit great wads of his sensitivity when he suddenly finds himself reminiscing about Joe's first crush:

I was enraged by the flaws of her, the unnatural cleft of her left hip, one buttock was actually atrophied, the raised veins behind the knees, the hanging breasts like deflated balloons, the yellowed face with loosened folds of skin at the neck, rising in parallel rows as she turned her head from me this stinking Hungarian hag this thieving crone bitch with the gall to think she had me for her toy boy her lover chuffing now like a f--king steam engine I brought the tears to her eyes she would acknowledge nothing she resisted . . . the lying c--t in the Pine Grove Motor Court,

and so on and on, into the tiresome night. One keeps having to remind oneself that the words were in fact typed by a middle-aged father of three who has been hired by a not-disreputable university to teach teen-aged Americans about the purposes of literature. "His prose is so clean and precise," sighs the critic Wilfrid Sheed, "even when it seems to ramble, that the details stand out sharply and form an abiding picture in the mind." Well, yes, in a way: "At one point," chortles Doctorow-as-Joe, "the coins sticking to the wet a-s, the wet belly, I invented a use of [a woman] so unendurable to her that with the same cry that must have come from her the day she fell twisting from the trapeze, she flung herself off the bed—a moment's silence, then the sickening shaming sound of bone and flesh slamming into the floor, a grunt." Ah, yes, the literary grunt. Well, young love is indeed wonderful, but class is dismissed—all except for Mr. Sheed, who will please remain in his seat.

Actually, Wilfrid Sheed has an excuse, of sorts. He is serving as head critic for the Book-of-the-Month Club these days, and *Loon Lake* is one half of a Double Selection. It would be asking too much of Mr. Sheed to insist that he stand up in front of the class and admit that Edgar Doctorow is a rather tacky novelist, completely devoid of talent. Still, when Mr. Sheed starts saying that Mr. Doctorow's novels constitute a picture of "nothing less than 20th-



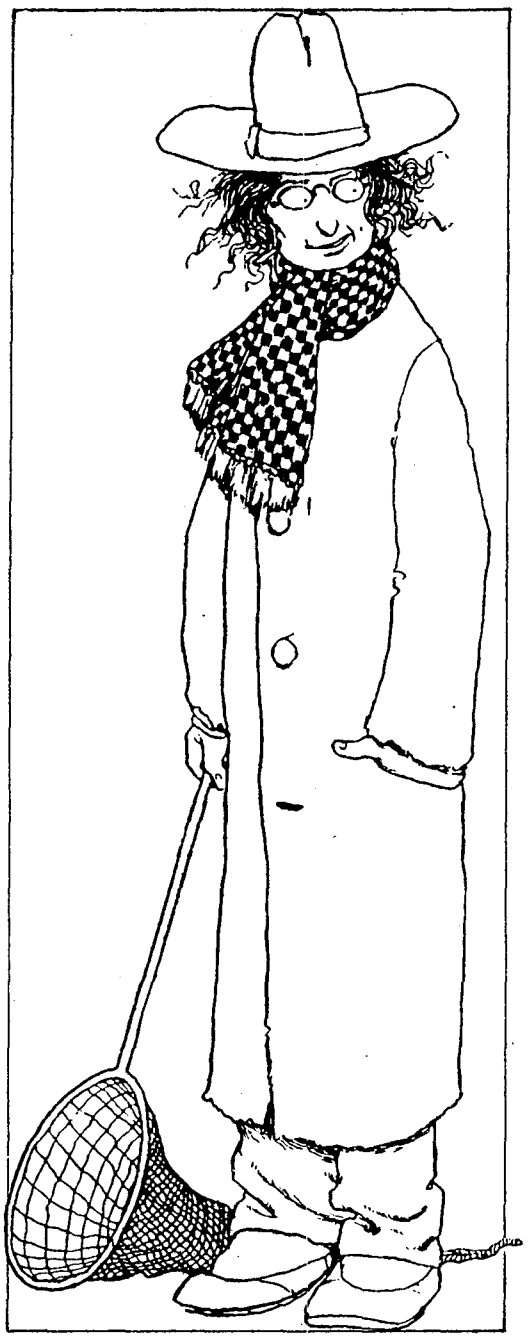
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

century America itself," and that "our stock of imaginings is increased, and the American experience has itself a new legend," chances are he'd rather not be taken too seriously (people who talk about "imaginings" and "the American experience" almost never want to be taken seriously). On the other hand, some of the juniors and seniors can remember a time when Wilfrid Sheed wrote real criticism, a time when he was still able to say that "cultural conservatism is becoming in an older writer; anything else is cosmetics anyway. If he whores after the new thing, he will only get it wrong and wind up praising the latest charlatans, the floozies of the New."

Apparently Mr. Sheed wasn't referring to himself. Perhaps he was thinking of Peter Prescott of *Newsweek,* who has managed to persuade himself that E.L. Doctorow is "a connoisseur of American literary myth," the sort of connoisseur who spends his afternoons "swimming securely in the main current of American literature" (apparently without getting wet). But then, Prescott of *Newsweek* also has a vested interest in the matter: He has never been able to live down some hasty remarks he made ten years ago about Mr. Doctorow's Rosenberg book. The memory must haunt him still: It was a slow day at *Newsweek,* and Mr. Prescott got to feeling silly, so he said that the book was "more deeply felt than all but a few contemporary American novels." "The year is not half spent," he continued happily, "and a better American novel may yet appear, but I doubt it." It may have seemed like a good joke at the office, but the consequences for Mr. Prescott have been awful: He helped to create the beast, so to speak, and now he must keep feeding the creature in order to preserve a certain reputation. That is the tragic lot of the professional critic, and it is one reason why so many nice guys end up—in Mr. Sheed's characteristically graceful phrase—"whoring after the new thing." What they never seem to realize is that, in our century, the New Thing is always the same New Thing: Fall for it once, and you're stuck for life.

Five or ten years ago, Mr. Doctorow was very much the New Thing. As a matter of fact, he was attached to a whole school of New Things, all of whom spent their time writing scatological political epics and issuing vague statements about the arrogance of power. Kurt Vonnegut was enrolled in the school, as were Joseph Heller, Robert Coover, William Styron, and a few others. Some of the students were better writers than others (Styron had the largest vocabulary), and some were more repulsive than others (Coover wrote a series of explicit short stories about raping small girls), but they all shared a common attitude towards life: They didn't like it much. "Part of the trick for people my age," Mr. Vonnegut told *Playboy* magazine recently, "is to crawl out of the envying, life-hating mood of the Great Depression at last." It is extraordinarily hard to love literature if you hate life, which may be why the Vonneguts of our time have such a hard time describing what they like to think of as their creative processes: "It isn't really up to me," maintains Mr. Vonnegut; "I come to work every morning and I see what words come out of the typewriter." He sounds an awful lot like Mr. Doctorow, who sat down at the typewriter, "began to type something," and "didn't even know what it was."

The trouble with typewriter-art, of course, is that typewriters have good days and bad days: "I wasn't even getting reviewed," recalls Mr. Vonnegut, as if that were something to complain about. "I was also noting the big money and the heavy praise some of my contemporaries were getting for their books, and I would think, 'Well, s--t, I'm going to have to study writing harder.'" And so he did, in a manner of speaking: "What the hell," he says today, looking back on it all: "I was building a power base anyway, with sleazo paperbacks. This society is based on extortion, and you can have anything you want if you have a power base. The computers of my paperback publishers began to notice that some of my sleazo books were being reordered," and the rest is history. Pretty soon Mr. Vonnegut, like Mr. Doctorow, had his very own collection of "big money" and "heavy praise." His first hit was, as he recalls with some excitement, "an Alternate Selection for Literary Guild," and his first Publishing Event was "a Primary Selection for Literary Guild, Saturday Review Book Club, and Book Find Club." This was success, in Mr. Vonnegut's terms: "If we aren't the establishment," he remembers saying at the time, "I don't know who is." But then, that is the fate of all conscientiously new things: They become Old Things almost before they know it. And if they are not especially deep New Things—if their newness was all they ever had to offer in the first place—they quickly become vulnerable, and then scared: "In order to have enough things to talk about," frets the Establishment's representative, "I may finally have to become an educated man." And then, in a sudden explosion of shy-making candor: "My career astonishes me. How could anybody have come this far with so little information, with such garbled ideas of what other writers have said?"



Mr. Vonnegut wasn't speaking for the rest of the faculty, but he might as well have been. His plea raises certain awkward questions about the intellectual stature of the school as a whole, and in addressing those questions we may expose the core of the problem. What we are talking about, not to put too fine a point on it, is literary intelligence, or the lack of it. Alfred Kazin pointed the way when he devoted a recent column to an analysis of "Doctorow's intellectual shortcomings." It is a delicate subject, and we don't want to be too rude, but . . . well, put it this way: None of these guys—Doctorow, Vonnegut, Heller, Styron, etc.—is ever going to make Head of the Department. In the end, it is this immunity from intellectual promotion that links them most securely together as a single historical and artistic unit; and if nobody around here is talking too raucously about the literature of stupidity, it is only because people around here are so extraordinarily polite.

Still, there are limits to tolerance, and if Mr. Doctorow and his colleagues give too many more interviews, those limits will almost certainly be tested. A series of interviews can reveal a lot about the mental and spiritual equipment a writer brings to the job. Too much, sometimes: It was Doctorow himself who recently told an interviewer that *Loon Lake* was an "accessible" effort because "anyone who watches television news for five minutes knows how to read this book." Even Mr. Doctorow must have suspected that he'd said a bit too much, because by the time the next interviewer showed up he'd changed his mind: If *Loon Lake* was a "confusing" book, well, that was okay, because, "you know, a little confusion isn't

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a bad thing." After all, "it's better to be ahead of a reader than behind him," said Mr. Doctorow sulkily, inadvertently giving away a closely-guarded trade secret. There was an uncomfortable silence, and then everybody went scurrying over to look at William Styron, who was talking, as so often before, about Sex and the American Novel.

Mr. Styron was telling the world that he "was plainly trying to work on several levels in terms of sex," as if the world cared much. His latest hero and heroine, for example, "would have had it beautifully made on the sexual level had there not been a madness in their relationship," and so forth. Mr. Styron told a female interviewer that he was also making what he insisted was "an interesting side point," which was that "there was a lot of sexual frustration existing on the cultural scene in the late '40s." Apparently Mr. Styron was very close to the cultural scene in those days: "I mean girls just weren't putting out yet in those years, right?" If Mr. Styron's ramblings didn't seem to have much to do with books, he was at least making more sense than poor Mr. Vonnegut, who had managed to get sex and literature all mixed up with the American space program: "It's a tremendous space f--k, and there's some kind of conspiracy to suppress that fact. . . . How would the taxpayers feel if they found out that they were buying orgasms for a few thousand freaks within a mile of the launch pad? And it's an extremely *satisfactory* orgasm," said Mr. Vonnegut with considerable enthusiasm. "I understand," he concluded sweetly, "that there are certain frequencies with which you can make a person involuntarily *s--t* with sound."

If there is a certain sameness to these professorial musings, it is only because there is a certain sameness to the professors. Inevitably, the whole exercise gets most embarrassing when the boys try to talk about real books and real writers. Mr. Doctorow remembers Nathaniel Hawthorne, for instance, as the one American author who "really holds up in my mind as someone very important," which must be a source of enormous comfort to the ghost of Nathaniel Hawthorne. And Mr. Vonnegut likes to recall that although he "wasted eight years building model airplanes and [masturbating]," he nevertheless found time to read some science fiction: "conservative stuff—H.G. Wells and Robert Louis Stevenson, who's easily forgotten, but he wrote *Jekyll and Hyde,*" explains Mr. Vonnegut, in the manner of one confiding a little-known fact of English literature.

Understandably annoyed, our English cousins fought back through novelist Graham Greene, who ran out into the front yard, said that Kurt Vonnegut was "one of the best living American writers," and then ran back inside and slammed the door, giggling all the while. Unfortunately, Mr. Vonnegut believed him: "I started out writing for a large audience," recalled one of the best living writers, "and if I did a lousy job, I caught a lot of s--t in twenty-four hours. It just turned out that I could write better than a lot of other people. Each person has something he can do easily and can't imagine why everybody else is having such trouble doing it. In my case it was writing." Nobody trusted themselves to say anything, and after a few minutes Mr. Vonnegut went away again.

Mr. Doctorow, on the other hand, almost never goes away. Every now and then he remembers that he's supposed to be an English teacher, and the consequences can be absolutely catastrophic, as they were the other day when he brought the conversation around to his only subject, politics and literature. "It's the old Matthew Arnold idea," he declared airily. "He said great writing needs the power of the man but it also needs the power of the moment." And indeed, it must have been an extremely old Matthew Arnold idea, since, as every freshman is supposed to know, Arnold spent the whole of his adult life attacking the concept. Over and over, a dozen different times in a dozen different places, he called on writers to "remember the plain and simple proceedings of the old artists, who attained their grand results by penetrating themselves with some noble and significant action, not by inflating themselves with a belief in the pre-eminent importance and greatness of their own times." And while Professor Doctorow is acquainting himself with the thought of Matthew Arnold, he might note that genuine artists "do not talk of their mission, nor of interpreting their ego, nor of the coming poet; all this, they know, is the mere delirium of vanity." Arnold knew what the Doctorows can never know, that in order to discover art in their own time, artists require "great actions, calculated powerfully and delightfully to affect what is permanent in the human soul; that so far as the present age can supply such actions, they will gladly make use of them; but that an age wanting in moral grandeur can with difficulty supply such, and an age of spiritual discomfort with difficulty be powerfully and delightfully affected by them." Which is to say that Mr. Doctorow's "old Matthew Arnold idea" was really nothing but a new Edgar Doctorow idea dressed up in a better man's clothes. Kurt Vonnegut came back to sum up the situation: "I get more respect for Truman Capote as the years go by," he said, "probably because he's becoming genuinely wiser all the time. I saw him on television the other night, and he said most good artists were stupid about everything but their arts." Cried Mr. Vonnegut: "I want to stop being stupid in real life. I want to stop being clumsy offstage." It was all a little sad, but the cheers from this quarter were deafening: After all, if things improve offstage, it stands to reason that they'll get a little better onstage as well.

Which leaves us with Mr. Vonnegut's original enquiry: How *could* these fellows have come so far, "with so little information"? And now we see that the question answers itself. They have come so far precisely because they have so little information. They are successful, in certain circles, not because they have anything to do with the purposes of art, but because they happen to serve the political, cultural, and professional ambitions of other people. And if a new book by E.L. Doctorow constitutes remarkably barren ground, intellectually and artistically, well, that is the point of the whole exercise: Empty art exists so that empty critics will have some place to hang their hats. Though he didn't

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

know it, this is what Mr. Doctorow was talking about when he told the editor of the *Nation* that the text of a book, rather than the author's intention, was the proper focus of literary criticism. The editor noted, with some satisfaction, that the novelist always qualified his comments about his own work with an "anyway, that's my theory," or an "as I see it." "Mr. Doctorow makes it quite clear," reported the editor, "that . . . his theories about his books are no more qualified than anyone else's." Well, of course not: Mr. Doctorow's popular reputation can survive only so long as he doesn't pretend to know what he's writing about.

He would be well-advised to take empty-lessons from William Styron, who's an old hand at the game. Recently a wayward book reviewer from the *Washington Post* asked Mr. Styron if his latest book could be seen as a sequel to the previous book, "in the sense that they deal with two levels of slavery." "Yes," replied Mr. Styron, "I guess it can." There was a long silence, followed by a little chatter about slavery, and then the reviewer asked if the book had anything to do with oppression. "Yes," said the novelist, "absolutely." There was another long pause, and then the reviewer suggested that Mr. Styron's central theme might be that of "victims turning into oppressors." "Oh absolutely," replied the novelist, wagging his intellectual tail and smiling helpfully. This went on for a while, and the nice woman from the *Post* began to get a little desperate. She pointed out that there was enormous significance in the fact that Mr. Styron had awarded the same first name to two of his "central victim-oppressor figures." Mr. Styron was pleasantly surprised: "I hadn't even thought of it until you mentioned it. And no one's mentioned it," he added indignantly, sticking his finger into the heart of the matter. He was glad, however, to have the information: "The choices of names," announced Mr. Styron, "often have curious subconscious significance." Well, he'd repeated the magic word, and before anybody knew what was happening the reviewer was asking him if he would please "compare this periodic density of evil to the new concept of black holes in physics." Yes indeedy, said Mr. Styron, "I think that's a very good analogy." He went on to say some complimentary things about black holes, and pretty soon his interviewer was encouraged to ask him if he was making a "universal statement about sin in the human condition." Replied Mr. Styron: "Yes." Which was exactly the right thing to say.

What we are talking about, of course, is party-fiction. Which is what the genuine critic Jonathan Raban was talking about five years ago when he said that Mr. Doctorow's *Ragtime* was "a splendid book to talk *about*—a big, party-sized idea." "There will be a very large number of people," predicted Mr. Raban, "who know little, and care less, about either the novel or history, who will see *Ragtime* as the most dazzlingly sophisticated exploration of both the novel and history that they have ever read." He was right, of course: Such people are always with us, always bored out of their skulls, and always ready for another party. That's why they were all so relieved to see *Loon Lake:* "It is a book I want to discuss and argue about with my friends," confessed Robert Towers of the *New York Times,* breaking out the faded balloons; "I hope they will quickly get around to reading it." And if Mr. Towers sounded a bit nervous, it was because so many of the best people had pleaded prior engagements. The novelist Mark Harris, for instance, sent his regrets in the form of a superb essay in the *New Republic:* He was sure, he said, that *Loon Lake* would give the kids "plenty of work looking up allusions and interpreting symbols and writing papers describing their findings," but he didn't want to join in the fun. "I do not believe this book will snap open surprisingly to the exertion of our minds," Mr. Harris explained gently, "nor do I expect that it will receive the corroboration of time." That's the sad thing about parties: They must always come to an end. And when they do, honest writers and critics must be ready to take advantage of the fleeting opportunity to throw open the windows and clean up the mess and make the place habitable again.

If *Loon Lake* is not a particularly interesting book, it is because its creator is not a particularly interesting man. It is not quite true, as Alfred Kazin says, that "Doctorow the novelist is not so smart as he is talented." The statement betrays a fundamental misconception about the nature of talent, and it is a rather popular misconception. Talent is divisible from intellect only in theory, rarely in fact: Literary intelligence cannot really be said to exist without the presence of the complementary talent that gives it form. By the same token, ability itself is only as real as the intellectual and moral guidance it receives: "Talent," as Lowell said, "is that which is within a man's power." The talent of a great soul is great because the soul is great, and the talent of a small soul can never outgrow its parent. As truth feeds beauty, so does intellect feed talent; as beauty defines truth, so does ability serve thought. It is all part of the same elixir, which is what Charles Rollin meant to imply when he said, almost three centuries ago, that "talents constitute our very essence." We have forgotten the wisdom, as we have forgotten Charles Rollin. He knew what our century does not: that genuine art can grow and survive only in those forests where talented intelligence seeks moral splendour, and that such forests are not so common as we think. The equation, then, is a simple one: If we cannot speak of "moral splendour" and *Loon Lake* with the same breath, then we will not find a connection between E.L. Doctorow and literary purpose. And where words exist without purpose, there is excruciating boredom. The poet Shelley must have seen Mr. Doctorow coming:

Peter was dull; he was at first
  Dull,—oh, so dull—so very dull!
Whether he talked, wrote, or rehearsed—
Still with this dullness was he cursed—
  Dull—beyond all conception—dull.

Even the Reviewers who were hired
  To do the work of his reviewing
With adamantine nerves, grew tired;—
Gaping and torpid they retired,
  To dream of what they should be doing. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tung Tung

ONE BABY FOR YOU, ONE BABY FOR ME

A story.

The following is a slightly edited translation of a Chinese story that appeared in Anti-Revisionism House (Fan Hsiu Lou), *a collection of short stories published in 1979 by a group of former Red Guards in Hong Kong. The author of the story, pseudonymously Tung Tung, was formerly a leader of a major Red Guard faction in Shanghai. Like the other contributors to the book, he has sought to write honestly and accurately about life as he experienced it in the People's Republic of China, using a thin fictional cover. The story is thus based on a true incident in a Shanghai factory. All the characters bear striking resemblance to living persons, who still mingle somewhere with the throng in China's greatest industrial city. The practice of birth control as described here has been confirmed by the Chinese Communist press—for example, by the Hong Kong newspaper* Ta Kung Pao *on June 11, 1980, which also disclosed that couples in Kwangtung Province who wish to have a child must now first obtain a "birth permit."*

Nothing—alas, nothing in this story has been exaggerated.

—Miriam London and Ta-ling Lee

The sky was overcast and a whistling north wind slashed at the faces of people waiting, huddled together at the trolley stop. Slowly the No. 21 trolley bus approached the Heng Pin Bridge stop on Szechuan North Road, its two flying-pigtail contact poles now and then spitting blue-white sparks. Even before it drew close, people swarmed forward to board. Ch'ien Ssu-ming, young and strong, went into action, applying a long-perfected technique. He elbowed his way through the crowd and quickly boarded the trolley. Then, clutching a side rail with his left hand and jamming his left foot against the closing door, he pulled his slow-moving companion, Ma Kuei-ts'ai, inside with his free right hand and kicked his right foot back once, hard. The kick caught those pressing behind him by surprise, tumbling them backward, while Ch'ien Ssu-ming withdrew his entire body into the car. Then, with his right hand, he removed the pancake and fried cruller clenched all the while in his teeth and roared out a command, "Let's go!" The door clanged shut.

Squeezed next to Ch'ien Ssu-ming, like sardines in a can, Ma Kuei-ts'ai shook his head and said, "Little Ch'ien, if I hadn't run into you, I'd never have made it."

"You got to be tough these days," Little Ch'ien said through a mouthful of pancake and cruller. "Be polite and people take advantage of you."

After the trolley passed the Ni Ch'eng Bridge, Ma and Ch'ien were finally able to find seats and sit down. Ch'ien Ssu-ming, however, seemed preoccupied today, unlike his usual sociable self. He just sat in silence, staring out the window.

Ma Kuei-ts'ai nudged him with an elbow. "What's the trouble, Little Ch'ien? Why the long face? Have a fight with the little lady?"

"No, it's just that planned parenthood meeting yesterday. Every time I think of it I get mad. Where does it say you got to have a vasectomy after the second child?" His face darkened with anger.

"Oh, but it's supposed to be for your own good! And besides, it's the state plan." Ma Kuei-ts'ai tried to smooth things over a bit.

"State plan?! Which central document says you got to have a vasectomy after two kids? Isn't it enough I make a point of practicing birth control on my own? I wouldn't have a vasectomy, even if they held a knife to my throat!" Ch'ien Ssu-ming was really mad.

"Come on, Little Ch'ien, you're past thirty, you're grown up now. You should know better than to try to break a rock with an egg. Being pig-headed will only land you in trouble. All you need is to be shut up in a few study classes* and you'll go along, like it or not."

"I'm not afraid of that. My family are factory workers three generations back and my own record has always been good. I don't give a damn what those jerks have to say about me behind my back!"

"You're right, I guess. Not like me. I'm just a hunk of dough. They can make me round or flat, just as they like."

"It's your tough luck—you've got that 'small businessman' background. Director Chiang said, didn't she, that couples with two kids who belong to the four classes† have absolutely got to have a vasectomy. But people from the working class just have to be mobilized to get up the enthusiasm, right? So, you had no choice. And by the way, Master Ma,‡ I heard your vasectomy

*A Mao Tse-tung Thought Study Class. A worker found guilty of ideological sin could be confined to such a class—actually a prison-like room within the factory—under heavy psychological pressure, usually for a period of one week to two months, but in some cases much longer.

†The four social categories originally stigmatized during the Mao era were the former "landlords, rich peasants, counterrevolutionaries and bad elements" and their descendants. However, the term "four classes" came to be applied loosely to all members of an expanding list of "bad categories."

‡*Shih-fu*, a polite manner of address for a skilled craftsman. The use of "master" in con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

didn't go too well. Is that right?"

Ma Kuei-ts'ai was rocked by the question. "Where'd you hear that?" he asked quickly.

"Never mind, never mind! Just some rumors. But what happened?" Ch'ien Ssu-ming noticed his companion's nervousness and pressed him.

"Well, uh . . . better not talk." Ma Kuei-ts'ai barely got out the words and waved the subject away with a despairing gesture of one hand.

"Why so hesitant? You can tell *me*, can't you?"

"Well, to tell the truth, Little Ch'ien, stay away from vasectomy if you can avoid it. I feel now like someone deaf and dumb who's taken bitter medicine—I can't even talk out the bitterness," Ma Kuei-ts'ai said, sighing.

"But, Master Ma, what was it, what happened?" Ch'ien Ssu-ming asked a little impatiently.

Ma Kuei-ts'ai glanced about furtively and then spoke in a low voice directly into Ch'ien's ear: "Little Ch'ien, they forced me to go to a hospital for a vasectomy and guess who did the operation on me—a young girl of 16-17!"

"A young girl?!" Ch'ien Ssu-ming stared at Ma incredulously, eyes wide.

"Yes, a barefoot doctor just up from Ch'uan Sha County for job training."

"How can this be? How could they be so shameless to let a young girl do *this* kind of operation?" Ch'ien Ssu-ming was at a loss to understand.

"What could I do?" Ma said in a pitiful voice. "Others refused, but not me. With my bad background, what right had I to speak up? Otherwise they'd pin a label on me for 'opposing revolutionary new-born things,' for 'opposing barefoot doctors.' So, I got up the strength to follow her into the operating room, I closed my eyes and put myself at her mercy."

"Well, you seemed to have pulled through all right."

"Pulled through? The worst possible thing happened!" Ma slapped his thigh heavily with one hand.

"The worst?" Ch'ien asked, bewildered.

"The day after the operation I felt something was wrong. My belly got all swollen, just as if I had a ball inside. I felt burning down there, but I just couldn't piss."

"Some infection? Because of poor sterilization?"

"Infection? It would've been simple if it were only that!" Ma Kuei-ts'ai became visibly more excited as he talked. "Finally, I just couldn't hold out any longer. My belly was all swollen and painful. I couldn't stand or sit. So, I went back to the hospital to look up Dr. Liu in the surgery department."

"And what did Dr. Liu say?"

"Nothing. He just examined me. And then he sighed and shook his head and ordered me to go immediately to the operating room."

"Another operation?" Ch'ien Ssu-ming burst out.

"Not that. The first operation had been just like a blind man trying to light a candle—a waste of wax. That barefoot doctor tied the wrong tube!"

"What? The wrong tube?"

"Right, she tied my urinary canal!" Ordinarily Ma Kuei-ts'ai did not show his emotions readily. But now he was puffing with rage.

"Oh, good heavens, this is like playing games with human life!" Ch'ien Ssu-ming said, shaking his head, indignant and moved almost to laughter at the same time.

At that moment, the trolley swerved sharply at high speed, throwing most of the passengers off balance. The canvas "soft section" connecting the two cars fanned out like an accordion, making it possible for the long, awkward conveyance to navigate the turn. Trolley No. 21 had reached its last stop.

Within days the story of how a barefoot doctor tied someone's urinary canal snowballed through the entire factory. The workers got scared and nobody wanted a vasectomy. All this worried Chiang Feng, director of the Planned Parenthood Office at the factory. Before the Cultural Revolution, Chiang Feng had been an ordinary cleaning woman. With the rise to prominence, however, of Chairman Mao's wife, Chiang Ch'ing, she—Chiang Feng—had also begun a new career at the factory. The reason was that she not only shared the same surname, but like Chiang Ch'ing, had also a single given name. Even more important, she was from Chiang Ch'ing's native province, Shantung—an asset, without a doubt. Thus, whenever she spoke at meetings, large or small, she never failed to mention the name of Chiang Ch'ing. By the time the Revolutionary Committee was set up in the factory, she became a natural choice for a post on the new staff.

A long banner stretched the length of the factory mess hall: "Use Class Struggle as the Key Link. Resolutely Strike Down Class Enemies Who Try to Sabotage the Work of Planned Parenthood!" Presiding over the struggle meeting on the platform was Chiang Feng.

"Comrades," she began, "we in Shanghai represent the vanguard of our country in the work of planned parenthood. But our class enemy will never give up the ghost. Lately, they've blown up an evil wind in our factory, trying to sabotage the work of planned parenthood. This handful of class enemy has infiltrated the different shops. They're stirring up the lower ranks, they're hatching secret plots. They're spreading rumors to smear one of the Cultural Revolution's 'new-born things'—the barefoot doctor—in an attempt to put down the accomplishments of the Cultural Revolution. This is not just some isolated thing. No, it's all connected with that current 'rightest wind to reverse earlier verdicts'—meaning, it's the new direction of the current class struggle. Today, we're going to criticize and struggle** a reactionary capitalist—Ma Kuei-ts'ai. Drag Ma Kuei-ts'ai up on the platform!" Chiang Feng furiously barked the command.

Head bowed low, Ma Kuei-ts'ai was led on stage by two militiamen. He stood at one corner of the platform, hunched forward almost 90 degrees, like a jumbo shrimp.

"Ma Kuei-ts'ai, why are you spreading rumors to sabotage planned parenthood work?" Chiang Feng demanded angrily.

"Director Chiang, I . . . but I never spread any rumors," Ma Kuei-ts'ai timidly ventured in his own defense. "That barefoot doctor really did tie my urinary canal . . . "

The audience roared.

Embarrassed by the audience's reaction, Chiang Feng quickly cut in, "Ma Kuei-ts'ai, who told you to say this? You've got to tell us your real motives. Isn't it true you deliberately tried to sabotage . . . "

"Oh, no! Oh, no! . . . " Ma Kuei-ts'ai stuttered in his haste to explain. "Director Chiang, it was all unintentional what I said on the trolley the other day."

"Unintentional? To hear you talk, it was all so simple! Then why didn't you choose some other time or place? You picked a time on the trolley when everyone was going to work so they could all hear you."

"Well, . . . uh . . . uh," Ma Kuei-ts'ai was at a loss to add a single word. He was

versation here implies, however, that Ch'ien Ssu-ming retains a slight distance between himself and the socially "inferior" Ma Kuei-ts'ai. On the other hand, the ingratiating Ma adopts the more friendly "*Hsiao* (Little) Ch'ien" in addressing his companion.

**To "struggle" someone is to interrogate for the purpose of inducing a confession and often involves physical coercion.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in shock, his mouth fallen wide open.

"This is class struggle! This is the trick our class enemy uses! I hereby announce: From now on, Ma Kuei-ts'ai will be put under supervised labor in the factory. Take him away!"

Ma Kuei-ts'ai wiped the sweat off his forehead with his hand. Secretly, he was glad to have been spared a beating.

Chiang Feng picked up a large sheet of red paper from the lectern: "Comrades, on behalf of the Factory Party Committee and the Planned Parenthood Office, I now announce the names of couples of child-bearing age in our factory permitted to have children in 1976. According to the quota allotted our factory by the higher authorities, we are allowed two child-bearing couples for this year. After discussion by the masses and review by the Party Committee, it has been decided that the quota will be filled by Comrades Yu Hung-wei and Niu Erh-ch'iang."

"Director Chiang!" Niu Erh-ch'iang, a strapping but slow-witted fellow, raised his right hand high for permission to speak.

"Yes, Comrade Niu Erh-ch'iang, what do you want to say?

Niu Erh-ch'iang scratched the back of his head. "First of all," he began, "I thank the Party for being so kind to give me one of the two births in the quota for the whole factory."

Chiang Feng was in a good mood, pleased with the response to her efforts. Evidently fearing, however, that Big Dummy Niu might not be able to express himself properly, she interrupted, gently, to ask that he speak slowly.

Such encouragement from Director Chiang was a shot in the arm to Niu Erh-ch'iang, who went rattling on: "Comrade Chi'ien Ssu-ming—now he had two daughters in a row and he's really wanted a son. My wife's in the village, you know—she gets not too many work points. So, with my wage of 30 yuan or so, I barely get by. So, the two of us talked it over and we decided not to have kids for the time being. We'd wait until our financial situation gets a little better to have kids. So . . . I'd like to loan my baby for getting born to Ch'ien Ssu-ming and I'll wait till . . . "

Here Big Dummy Niu brought down the house, but he insisted on finishing the last sentence: "I'll wait till the next time to get my quota back and get my own baby."

Chiang Feng was between laughter and tears. She shouted, "No, a quota cannot be loaned to anyone else! If you don't have your own baby this year, it means you voluntarily give up the quota." Thereupon, she hastily dismissed the meeting.

It was 1977 and the "Big Red Roster" of planned parenthood for the year had just been posted. As in the previous year, it was posted on the main bulletin board, right at the front gate of the factory. In addition to the usual information listed after each name—age, class background, number of children, year for which birth was planned, year for which birth was approved, etc.—the Factory Party Committee and Planned Parenthood Office had added a new item for 1977, contraceptive measures used. There were two reasons, so people said, behind this move to disclose publicly the contraceptive measures used by every couple: to mobilize the masses for exchange of experiences and to enable them to watch over one another.

Niu Erh-ch'iang had tried his best during the year, but his wife failed him—she did not bear him a child. Thus the quota was wasted. On the other hand, Ch'ien Ssu-ming's wife was pregnant again.

At the sound of the quitting bell, everyone ran to the Big Red Roster, quite curious to learn how others practiced contraception. One wicked fellow read aloud: "Ch'ien Ssu-ming, condoms, pills . . . "

Before he could go on, Old T'ang, the office messenger, rushed into the crowd and yelled: "Is Ch'ien Ssu-ming around? Telephone from home.†† Go to the hospital immediately. Your wife is having a baby!"

"Wow! Ch'ien Ssu-ming is really tops when it comes to producing babies! Even double insurance didn't help!"

The crowd burst into laughter. Red-faced, Ch'ien Ssu-ming hopped on his bicycle and quickly rode away.

At the hospital he tiptoed into the ward, where he saw his wife lying in bed, looking very worn. He gently touched her face with his hand.

"Hsiu-ying, it's a son, right?" Ch'ien Ssu-ming asked, full of hope.

Hsiu-ying opened her weary eyes, took one timid look at her husband and then silently closed them again.

"Another girl? Oh, you . . . how can you be such a no-good . . . "

"Ssu-ming, how can you blame me? I wanted a son just as much as you! But . . . maybe the next . . ." Tears rolled from the corners of her eyes onto the pillow.

"The next? We don't even know what to do with this one!"

He took it all out on Hsiu-ying: "We won't be able to get her a residence permit and there won't be any ration! You won't have maternity leave and we'll have to pay the delivery and hospital fees! And, yes, there'll be criticism the minute I return to the factory. Big character posters will sure to be out tomorrow. You've lost all my face for me!"

He sat on the edge of the bed. Burying his head in his hands, he talked to himself: "This is the end. I'm going to die this time. They're going to make me have a vasectomy!"

The room was still, the bed was still—except for Hsiu-ying's soft sobbing. All the other patients in the ward watched them silently.

Ch'ien Ssu-ming stared at the floor. A strange thought crossed his mind: How nice it would be if a T'angshan earthquake hit Shanghai at this very moment, so that he could fall into a crack in the earth, never have to face anyone again or have any worries anymore. □

††This is not a private home telephone, but one on the street near the workers' apartment house.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Stuart L. Koehl and Stephen P. Glick

THE RAPID DEPLOYMENT FARCE

What can finesse 5 Soviet armored divisions,
overcome 300 urban guerillas, and be home in time for supper?

. . . when (the Carter) administration took office, there was no Rapid Deployment Force whatsoever. We have created one. We are spending lots of money on it.

—*Thomas Ross,*
Defense Department Spokesman

Against greatly superior forces it is possible to win a battle, but hardly a war.

—*Napoleon*

President-elect Reagan has made the enlargement and reform of the American military establishment one of the highest priorities of his administration. Yet to overcome the neglect and mismanagement of the last fifteen years will require a tremendous expenditure over a long period—at least four, and more likely, eight, years. Military production cannot be increased, nor can the command structure and mentality of the armed forces be changed overnight. It is, however, imperative that such changes occur, for American security interests are continuously and precipitously threatened by the instability of nations which supply our raw materials.

The Iran-Iraq war has continued for over two months, and now threatens to spill over into other parts of the Persian Gulf, leading experts to question whether the United States is able to intervene effectively in the region to secure the West's supply of crude. Our retiring President and his Secretary of Defense insisted throughout the presidential campaign that we remained neutral in that conflict out of choice, but that we also had adequate air and naval forces in the area to fight, if necessary. Carter and Brown failed to realize that air and seapower alone are inadequate for decisive intervention in a land war. Even in this day of wonder weapons, war in the end boils down to the grunt—the poor, bloody infantryman who must go in, root out the enemy, and hold the ground until the politicians decide what to do with it. And with the total number of American ground troops in the Middle East today a paltry 1800, small wonder that increasing attention has turned to the Rapid Deployment Force.

America's strategic requirements make the need for the RDF unquestioned. It is just as clear, however, that the Carter administration promoted the RDF as a panacea for all the blunder and pusillanimity of the past four years, claiming for it powers and abilities far beyond those of a military unit of its size. Dithering and incompetence have left the RDF languishing mostly on paper, with no capability, except that of the "too-little, too-late" variety.

Competing for influence in determining the size and composition of the RDF are two schools. The first argues for a small, lightly armed force the main purpose of which would be deterrence. It matters little that a force this size would be easily outgunned, even by regional opponents, for deployment of a symbolic force of American troops would deter Soviet intervention by raising the possibility of a superpower confrontation. If necessary, the RDF could even be dropped in the path of a Soviet invasion, halting it in its tracks for the same reason.

The opposing school dismisses such talk as dangerous nonsense. A small, symbolic RDF would be in no position to deter a Soviet invasion, since no force this size could possibly block all lines of a large-scale troop movement. The Soviets would bypass or overrun and destroy the RDF so quickly, that the President would be faced with a *fait accompli,* forcing him to accept either American defeat or escalation to battlefield or strategic nuclear weapons.

Far better, this school believes, to have a large, combat-ready RDF capable of defeating any opponent, or at least of holding a beachhead until reinforcements arrive. Enhanced sea and airlift capabilities along with a forward stockpiling of supplies in regional locations would compensate for any loss of strategic mobility.

This philosophy was favored—in theory, at least—by the Carter administration. Its implementation of the RDF, however, as administered by Robert Komer (the architect of the pacification schemes used in Vietnam under Johnson) reflects views closer to those of the symbolic RDF school, as the evidence presented will demonstrate.

The RDF, or Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force, to give its proper designation, is planned currently as a four-service force capable of deployment anywhere on the globe within four to six weeks. Existing ground, air, and naval units are being earmarked for RDF service, and will be controlled in wartime by the RDF Headquarters, based at MacDill AFB near Tampa, Florida. This Headquarters has no peacetime control over units slated for it, and must request permission for their use from the respective parent services. Current plans for the RDF call for 110,000 men—three U.S. Army divisions and one Marine Amphibious Brigade (MAB). The Army divisions are the 82nd Airborne, 101st Air Assault, and the 24th Mechanized; the MAB has not yet been specified. The 82nd and 101st are designed to be transported by air. They lack armor, and (unlike Soviet airborne divisions) have

Stuart L. Koehl and Stephen P. Glick are practicing research analysts for a Washington-based defense consulting firm and frequent contributors to The American Spectator.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

little organic transport which can be delivered by aircraft. Smaller than line divisions, and deficient in heavy weapons, these units are less able than conventional infantry divisions to sustain casualties or fight prolonged battles. The Marine Amphibious Brigade, at 16,500 men, is larger than most U.S. Army divisions. It is a heavy infantry unit, with only one tank battalion, little organic transport, and less artillery than a full division. All three are "straight leg" (unmechanized) units; they lack the tactical mobility to fight fluid battles of maneuver, and must rely on set piece battles and firepower tactics on both offense and defense.

The 24th Mechanized is a fully mobile division, with 216 tanks, armored personnel carrier (APC) mounted infantry, and self-propelled artillery. In the event of conflict, most of the heavy equipment would have to be sealifted, extending the deployment period to more than 100 days. Although the division is capable of mobile offensive and defensive operations, it is unlikely to undertake them, given the Army's firepower-attrition tactics.

The RDF has been assigned no specific aviation, naval, or supply units, nor has it any inherent air or sealift capabilities. All are currently in critically short supply, rendering logistics the key problem of the RDF. Only about 60 C-5A and 200 C-41 heavy transport aircraft are available; many of these are undergoing repair and modernization, or are required for previous commitments. These are the only aircraft in our current inventory which can carry tanks, cranes, and other heavy equipment. Because the average U.S. infantry division requires nearly 1,200 tons of supplies per day, the requisites of the RDF, including all ancillary services (aviation, medical, naval, logistical, etc.) would amount to 6,000 tons per day; satisfying this would require the total resources of the Military Aircraft Command (MAC), as well as a greater number of naval provision ships than are available. Ships from the Reserve (mothball) Fleet, and commercial aircraft from the Civilian Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) could alleviate these shortages. Unfortunately, the CRAF program is behind schedule, and activating the Reserve Fleet would take time and give advance notice of our intentions.

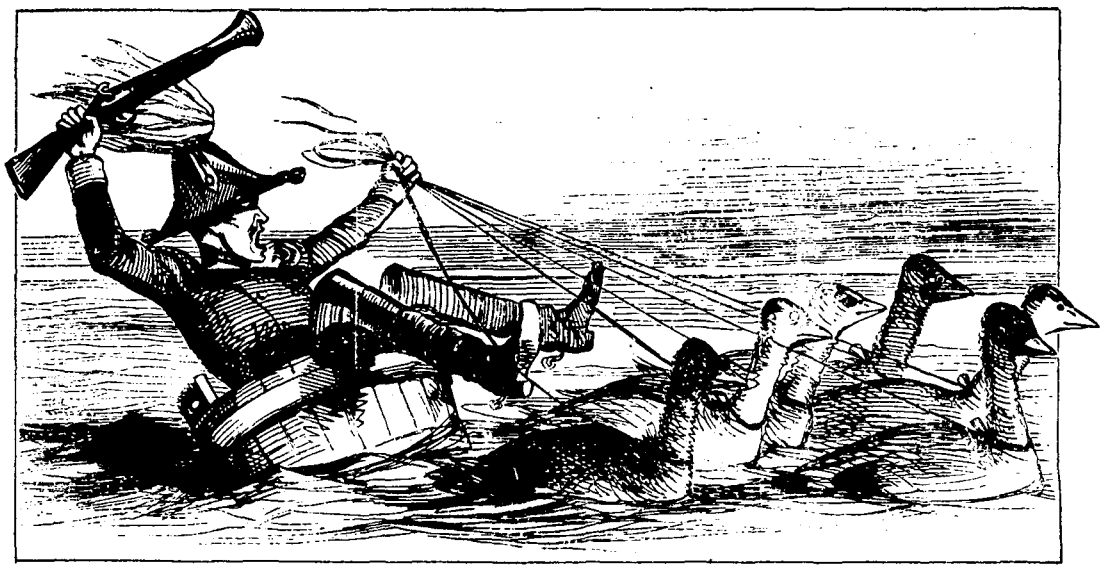
The basic assumption behind both the heavy (war-fighting) and symbolic RDF philosophies is the traditional American tactic of attrition. As formulated in the Army's Operations Manual, *FM 100-5*, attrition pits strength against strength, in a series of grinding frontal engagements. The Army relies on superior American firepower, fire-control systems, and precision-guided munitions to inflict casualties on the enemy at a highly favorable ratio. This requires near parity of numbers, secure communications, and an ample supply of heavy weapons and ammunition; the RDF enjoys none of these. In examining possible opposition in the Middle East, one finds that Iran has about 400 operable tanks; Iraq, 2,000; Syria, 2,000; and South Yemen, 300. The Soviet Union can be expected to field several thousand tanks from its divisions along the Iranian border. If fully deployed, the RDF would field only 270 tanks. Thus, opponents of a heavy RDF are correct in assuming that it would be impossible for a three- or four-division force to hold out until the arrival of reinforcements. General Volney F. Warner, commander of the 82nd Airborne (which is also the fast reaction force, ostensibly ready within 48 hours) has raised doubts about the ability of the RDF to survive at its present force levels. In response, heavy force proponents have designed even larger RDF's, placing their hopes in esoteric weapon systems which exist only on the drawing board. Current plans call for an increase in the RDF to over 300,000 men, including 100,000 reservists. The logistics crunch, however, calls into question the possibility of transporting and maintaining these troops overseas.

In addition to the myriad practical obstacles to the implementation of the RDF, there exists a fundamental bias in political attitude: Military strategists concerned with the RDF are (quite understandably) fixated on the Middle East, and so have failed to prepare the force for the diverse arenas in which it could conceivably be employed. Specialization for the Middle East has diminished the utility of the RDF, leaving it capable of little more than seize-and-hold, seize-and-deny, and blocking-type actions. These missions assume middle- to high-intensity warfare, and are not well suited to the low-intensity threats which the RDF might have to face elsewhere on the globe. Moreover, the Mideast orientation presumes both the likelihood of Soviet opposition, and also the predominance of tank warfare, which has led to overemphasis on anti-tank capabilities, and neglect of jungle, mountain, and urban fighting. Thus the tendency is to increase the size of the force until it is too large to move quickly or to handle strictly local opposition, all the while remaining too small to deal with a determined Soviet attack without immediate reinforcement from the continental United States, Europe, or elsewhere.

As critical as these issues are, at this point they remain academic, for the Carter administration never took the quick and effective action necessary to develop the RDF into anything beyond a token force. To begin with, the administration made no attempt to improve the combat readiness of the units assigned to the RDF; only the 82nd Airborne is close to being combat ready. General P.X. Kelly, USMC, commander of the RDF, admitted that his command had been seriously impaired by a shortage of men, equipment, and supplies, (Secretary Brown's statements to the contrary notwithstanding).

At various points throughout his administration, President Carter announced programs designed to enhance U.S. strategic mobility in general and that of the RDF in particular. These included a flotilla of 14 Roll-on/Roll-off transport ships for the rapid loading and movement of tanks and other heavy equipment; a new tactical transport aircraft, AMST; a new heavy cargo aircraft, CX; service-life extension for the C-5A; purchase of eight foreign-built, 33-knot container ships (which can move an entire infantry division, including all its equipment, from the continental United States to the Persian Gulf in 14 days); and the UH-60 Blackhawk utility helicopter. The administration also projected weapons systems particularly well suited for the RDF: a new light tank, the Light Mobile Protected Weapon System; the AV-8B Advanced Harrier, the Vertical Takeoff/Landing attack airplane needed by the Marine Corps (the importance of the ability to operate without runways should be obvious); and Advanced Amphibious Assault Vehicle, LVTC (X); Roland and Stinger, mobile, lightweight suface-to-air-missiles; new anti-tank guided weapons; and new lightweight artillery pieces. Additionally, the administration stated that it would augment regional stockpiles of munitions, supplies, and spare parts for the RDF (mostly at Diego Garcia).

But while Carter gave, so did he take away. Many of these systems have been



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

delayed, deferred, or simply cancelled. The administration eliminated two of three Roll-on/Roll-off ships from this year's appropriation, and cut back on funds required to extend the service life of the C-5A. AMST was cancelled and CX deferred. The FFG-7 Oliver Hazard Perry Class frigates—perhaps the most economical and successful ever—were cut from a planned 72 to only 54, and the eight foreign-built container ships never purchased. Thus, the RDF simply does not have enough support ships to maintain naval forces on station under wartime conditions, nor does it possess the escort ships necessary to protect convoys to the war zone.

Carter's appropriations also call for the reduction of Blackhawk helicopters from 1107 to 491 over the next three years. Roland and Stinger were dropped, even though no comparable system exists to protect RDF troops from low-level air attack. Because the Marine Corps' particular need for the AV-8B is not shared by other branches of the armed services, it fell afoul of Secretary Brown's desire for commonality, and so has been neglected. Each year Brown tried to have the program cancelled; each year Congress tried to restore it. Carter's skill at ordering new systems, and then quietly eliminating them, caused the President to appear to be supporting greater military spending, when in fact the total impact of his policies had just the opposite effect.

As if inadequacies in hardware weren't serious enough, the RDF is plagued by difficulties in two further areas: supply and training. Only one forward supply dump has been established (at Diego Garcia), and it can service only four battalions and four squadrons of aircraft. Finally, no major training operations involving all RDF units have been undertaken; the performance capability of the force remains unproven. Thus, the RDF is (and will be for the immediate future) so riddled with inadequacies and doubts, that its effectiveness is both unsatisfactory and unknowable.

Our failure stems as much from the conception and composition of the RDF as from the unwillingness of the Carter administration to develop it. The Reagan administration now has the opportunity both to redesign and actually implement the RDF. In so doing, what should the new administration keep in mind?

As suggested, the RDF must be versatile. It must be prepared to fight a variety of opponents, ranging from poorly armed local militias to well-trained Soviet or Soviet-client forces, and under diverse conditions, be they desert, mountain, jungle, or city. It must be able to undertake "quick and dirty" commando raids; seizure of facilities or resource centers; pacification; punitive expeditions; holding actions; active defense; denial missions; and offensive intervention.

Again, the RDF will often have to fight badly outnumbered for extended periods, rendering attrition-based tactics too expensive in men and supplies to succeed.

By implication, the RDF must be administratively, logistically, and operationally self-contained, composed of units sharing a common doctrine and training, under an experienced and permanent command.

Finally, the RDF must be composed of units capable of defeating a well-equipped enemy, without dependence on the mountains of supplies traditionally required by conventional forces. (This, of course, runs counter to American experience and inclination).

Hence, the fundamental conceptual error was the selection of units from different services to operate together under an umbrella command aimed at one theatre of operations—Europe. Assuredly, selection of units from all four services advances flexibility, but this is outweighed by the problems of command, doctrine, training, and administration (painfully revealed in Operation Eagle Claw, the Iranian Rescue Mission).* The idea of an umbrella headquarters is unsound; units composing the force have little contact with it, except during exercises and actual operations.

Instead, new units should be created with an organization emphasizing specialization and flexibility. The best structure would be a corps of independent light-armored infantry brigades, supported by a variety of light-armored, anti-tank, engineer, and other specialist units. These brigades would be grouped into divisional task forces for particular missions, like the Israeli Ugda of 1967. For smaller missions, special battalion and brigade task forces could be assembled from the entire corps. The RDF component forces would be permanent, uniformly trained, and beholden to a single commander.

Obviously, such a lightly armed force would be overcome quickly were it to employ traditional attrition tactics. The RDF should therefore be a highly mobile force using "relational-maneuver" tactics. Forgoing attempts to destroy the enemy's combat assets incrementally, it rather should concentrate on the enemy's ability to fight effectively, by paralyzing his command structure through rapid movement and attacks on his supply lines and communications. When the enemy commander and his units can no longer communicate, their coordination is destroyed and the army ceases to exist.

For all these reasons, the RDF must develop a high degree of *tactical* mobility. It will achieve this not through weight of armor and firepower, but through dispersion, speed, and skilled reactions to terrain and local conditions. In this sort of warfare, the ability to fight head-to-head battles is secondary; stand-up battles are to be avoided, not courted. Instead of heavy tank units, we can use available light, wheeled armored cars; light and heavy mortars and multiple rocket launchers take the place of towed or self-propelled guns and howitzers. Fuel and ammunition requirements are reduced, while the tactical *and* strategic mobility of the force are improved. Lastly, to fight this sort of war would require a form of training totally different from that now provided by the Army: Skill and initiative must be instilled among the low-command echelons, for those occasions when junior officers cannot defer to the high command for instructions.

*See the authors' "Why the Rescue Failed" in the July 1980 issue of *The American Spectator*.

What must happen is clear; getting there is the problem. Contrary to the currently advocated multi-service scheme (one suspects that no branch of the military wanted to be left out of the anticipated funding bonanza), the bulk of the RDF mission should be turned over to the Marine Corps. The RDF mission is similar to traditional Marine assignments: The Marines have their own tactical air groups, trained to operate in close cooperation with Marine ground troops; morale would be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

improved by the Corps' characteristic solidarity; and administration would be smoothed by a relatively simple reorganization of one or two 49,000-man Marine Amphibious Forces to fit the structure required by the RDF. The applicability of Marine Corps doctrine to light infantry tactics would simplify training and logistics, in which emphasis is placed on maneuverability rather than attrition. Finally, the Marines' light infantry and armor characteristics are more compatible with sea and air transport than are traditional units.

None of this, however, rules out ancillary roles for the Army, Navy, and Air Force. The Navy would retain all sealift and naval support tasks, including convoy escort, command and communications, shore bombardment, and air superiority and interdiction missions. The Army would be indispensable in providing a portion of the RDF with paratrooper training, and the Air Force would be responsible for strategic and tactical airlift as well as air superiority and interdiction missions once airfields were either secured or constructed.

If the Reagan administration adopts a proposal similar to this, the RDF could be battle ready in less than two years. Additionally, because "relational-maneuver" tactics are applicable to the entire American military, the RDF could serve as both proving ground and example for the entire armed forces. This would help break the ossified mindset of the American officer corps, and bring creative, inventive officers to prominence. Proof of this can be found in Israel's experience with Unit 101, a force similar to the RDF established in 1954. The unorthodox techniques of Unit 101 subsequently percolated through the entire Israeli army, resulting in phenomenal military success.

But even more must be done to improve the combat readiness of this proposed RDF, largely by reversing the cutbacks of the Carter administration. Perhaps most important is the enlargement of the strategic sea and airlift forces. All C-5A's must receive service-life extensions. CX must be funded and developed, or the C-5 placed back in production. To allow high-speed sealift of the entire RDF, more RO-RO and amphibious assault ships must be acquired, and those eight foreign-built container ships purchased. To exploit its off-runway capability, the AV-8B must be deployed by the Marine Corps. Finally, heavy assault helicopters of the CH-53 family are needed, as are both a modern amphibious assault tank or landing craft and a new light, wheeled armored vehicle.

The Reagan administration should lay out the entire RDF program in detail, and appropriations should be voted for the whole package to ensure that we are not left straddling the fence with only a portion of the program. Many critics will scream to the heavens about the waste of money, but let us not forget that the most expensive thing in the world is a second-rate army.

Mere possession of an instrument of force, however, will not by itself reverse more than a decade of indecision and vacillation in foreign policy. What the Reagan administration must do, then, is to use the RDF boldly when appropriate. To those who regard the RDF as window dressing, this will come as a rude surprise. But if we are victorious, we will, at a stroke, recoup most of the prestige lost since the Vietnam War.

The establishment of the RDF in the absence of clear declarations of our intent to use it will emasculate it as a deterrent force (although, as stated, deterrence is not its only object). The Reagan administration must unambiguously announce the nation's RDF policy, and must protect both its own credibility and America's integrity by employing the force in all the promised situations. Only in this way can the besieged fundaments of American foreign policy be retrieved. □

John Nollson

THE TRANSITION CONTROL CENTER

Determined to elevate my station in life, I left my home in East St. Louis, Illinois, immediately after NBC announced that Ronald Reagan would be the next President of the United States. I loaded my '67 Plymouth with all my possessions, including my only blue suit, and I reached the Nation's Capital after an uneventful drive. It was dark when I arrived, and the streets were clogged with traffic. Washington had the air of one of those great Chinese cities I had read about; not only were there cars and trucks and buses everywhere, there were even more rickshaws and sedan chairs as both the humble and the great moved in the same direction. Realizing that I could not fight the crowd, I abandoned my car and joined the surging throng of humanity which was pressing ahead on foot.

Our common destination was an office building near the corner of Seventeenth and M Streets, Northwest. The side of the building seemed bathed in a vast collage of color, a recently installed neon sign like one in Times Square. "Reagan-Bush National Transition Headquarters," it blinked, sometimes in intricate script, sometimes in plain block letters. Occasionally, clouds of smoke would belch from the *O*'s. The intersection was marked by two great beams of blue light, enormous searchlights of the sort used to signal a world premiere. As I drew closer to the beams, they seemed to form a vast *T* in the autumn night, the *T* of transition. I could see the building now. My senses throbbed with the energies of the crowd which surrounded it. There were thousands of men, women, and children milling about, like the crowds which come to gawk at a great fire. Indeed, there were several fire engines and, every so often, the firemen would menacingly point their hoses at the unruly mob. Mounted police were deployed in force and foot patrolmen —in full riot dress—strained at the leashes of their snarling German shepherds. I checked out my gas mask just in case the police decided to employ tear gas.

Every so often, the guards would admit someone to the building. Whenever the door was opened, a great moan would rise from the crowd. As if a single person, it would surge forward, only to be beaten back. Occasionally, a helicopter would arrive to evacuate one of the casualties.

The situation called for daring. Recalling my Ft. Bragg ranger training, I slipped away from the crowd and scaled one of the buildings across the street. Reaching into my duffle bag, I removed a device which fired a line across to the top of the Transition Building. The electomagnet at the end of the line held fast. I inched my way across. I decided to spend the night on the roof and I slept in a small pup tent.

At dawn, I shed my army fatigues and put on my only blue suit. With an acetelyne torch, I cut into the rooftop air-conditioning unit and, carefully crawling through the maze of aluminum ducts, I managed to make my way to the seventh floor. It was sheer instinct, I suppose, which directed

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

me down one of the ducts because, before I knew it, my face was pressed up against the metal grating through which temperature-controlled air entered the largest office I had ever seen. Though on the brink of physical collapse, I managed to summon all of my remaining strength. With a single karate chop, I broke the grating. Then I lowered myself into the office.

It was a tastefully-furnished room, done in beige, my favorite color. I helped myself to a glass of cool water from the beige carafe. Then I sat down on the beige sofa, waiting for whomever it was that worked in the place.

I didn't have long to wait. The door opened and a group of people entered. They were led by a friendly-looking man. There were cheerful singers, dancers, and musicians. The leader took his seat behind the desk and placed a set of earphones on his head. From behind his chair, he picked up a ukulele and then he began to strum. One of the young ladies placed a Lipton teabag in a cup of hot water and brought it to him. He took a sip and, smacking his lips in approval, he turned to me as I remained seated.

"How are ya, how are ya?" he asked.

The voice plucked a chord deep within my unconscious. Then it came to me. It was Arthur Godfrey.

"Just fine," I replied, "but I must be in the wrong place. I thought this was the Reagan-Bush Transition Headquarters. I didn't realize you were about to begin your broadcast, Mr. Godfrey."

"But this *is* the Transition Headquarters," Mr. Godfrey said, "and I am the Transition Director."

"Yes," interrupted the deepest basso voice I had ever heard, "this is Tony Marvin welcoming you to the Transition Hour, with Arthur Godfrey and all the Little Godfreys. And now, here he is: Arthur—just flip me over and call me flapjack—Godfrey!"

"Still sponsored by Pillsbury?" I asked.

"And Lipton," he answered. "Take tea and see. But first, Archie Bleier and the Chordettes will perform 'Mr. Sandman.'"

Godfrey applauded the performance. "Wonderful," said Godfrey, grinning in approval. "And now I want to bring on Frank Parker and Marion Marlowe to sing! Young man, you seem disappointed."

"I was kind of hoping for Lu Ann Simms and Julius Larosa," I said, "but I'll wait."

At the mere mention of Larosa's name, Godfrey's face darkened. "He doesn't work here any more," he scowled. "I fired him. I froze him out 25 years ago, and there's no way he's gonna get back in!"

Taken aback by the vehemence of Godfrey's denuciation of Larosa, I mumbled, "No reason for old controversies to cast a pall over happy times like Transition. But I still don't understand how you gained control over the Transition Process."

"Well," said Godfrey, "I was among the first to realize that the 1980 election was a solemn referendum on the 1950s. I was the first to notice Jimmy Carter's resemblance to Howdy Doody."

"Howdy Doody; Kukla, Fran, and Ollie, yes, indeed," I said noncommittally, hoping not to give offense and jeopardize my prospects.

"But it wasn't all the same to the American people," Godfrey said assertively. "I realized that what the American people wanted was for Bishop Sheen's angel to return and wipe the slate clean. Certainly, you remember Bishop Sheen's angel?"

"Of course," I continued noncommittally, "Bishop Sheen; Captain Video; Mr. Wizzard; fine Americans all."

Fortunately, Godfrey interrupted me to turn on the radio. The voice was unmistakable. It was Don McNeill, inviting us to march around the breakfast table for the 35,163rd time.

"He used to be a real competitor of mine." Godfrey said as the march music filled the office, "but we've managed to work together as one man in defense of the fifties. I even got Ozzie Nelson out of retirement. A real tragedy there; I mean, you remember how one of Ozzie and Harriett's sons grew up to be a rock singer. It had all been arranged that he would marry Princess, Robert Young's daughter. But Princess went off to the state university to study home economics and wouldn't have anything to do with Little Ricky."

Godfrey mumbled something about how father knows best and then he switched off the radio. He invited a distinguished gray-haired lady, barefooted and wearing a grass skirt, to dance the hula.

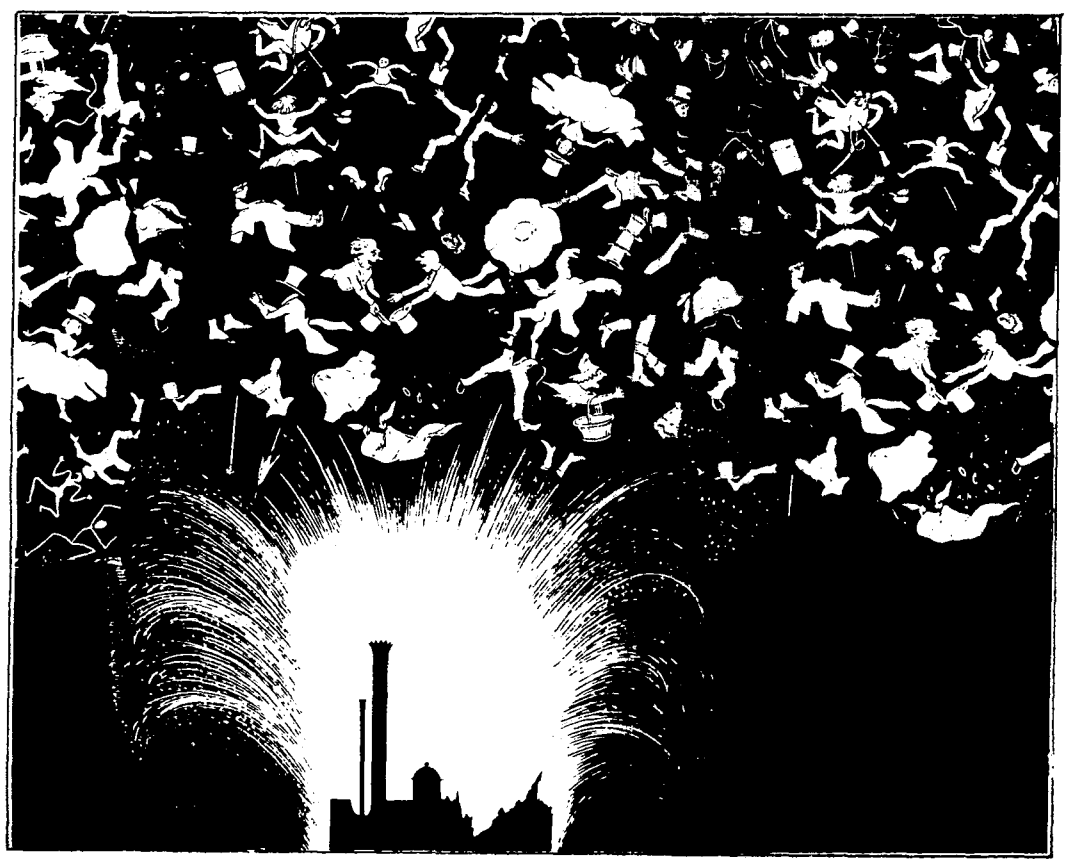
"Haleloke is still terrific," Godfrey beamed.

"But, I *still* don't understand how you seized control of the transition process," I continued.

"It wasn't easy," Godfrey acknowledged. "They tried to keep me out. They kept talking about Eisenhower retreads. They even threatened to bring in Mort Sahl to make fun of me."

"What did you do about that?" I asked.

"I told them straight out: if they brought in Mort Sahl to make fun of me, I'd bring in Sam Levenson to make fun of them. Besides, I've still got lots of buddies at the Strategic Air Command out in Omaha. Curt LeMay used to be a good pal of mine."



I realized that I had broken the ice, so I reached inside the jacket of my blue suit and brought out a copy of my résumé. I handed it to Godfrey who studied it intently.

"You look like the kind of nice kid we'd like to have around here. Can you sing?" Godfrey asked.

"Oh, I can carry the tune as well as the next man."

"Do you know any of the old songs, young fella?" Godfrey continued.

"Not all of them," I said humbly, "but I know a good many."

With that, he beckoned to Lu Ann Simms to join us. Lu Ann seemed pleased when Godfrey recommended that she become my singing partner. "Lu Ann," I said, "you don't seem even a day older since last I saw you on television."

Well, maybe she had aged just a tiny bit in the past 25 years or so, but not so much that you'd really notice. And besides, what's one harmless little fib anyway?

After all, it's not every day that a young man gets a chance to sing a duet with the girl of his dreams. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SPECIAL

CORRESPONDENCE

Tunney vs. Gilder

Joshua Gilder's review of Walker Percy's *The Second Coming* in the October *American Spectator* is a travesty of literary criticism. Most if not all of his criticisms are unjustified by the text. The references he makes to Percy's previous writings, as well as those he fails to make, suggest that his familiarity with Percy's work, which he feels competent to criticize as a "body," is inadequate, not to say scant. (Indeed, any review of *The Second Coming* which fails to consider Will Barrett's previous appearance in *The Last Gentleman* is immediately suspect.) Moreover, he criticizes Percy's use of "ideas" in his fiction, then fails to demonstrate an understanding or even an awareness of the ideas that motivate Percy's writing.

Gilder accuses Percy of "romanticizing" mental illness. Consider the following passage from *The Second Coming* (Allie, a refugee from a mental hospital and the heroine of the story, describes post-electroconvulsive therapy sensations):

> Your jaw will hurt and your teeth will be sore from the mouthpiece. You will be conscious but still paralyzed from the Anectine (curare). . . . You'll feel like a rape victim in every way but one.

Of course, it's possible that this is Gilder's idea of romance. (If it is, though, he's never getting *my* phone number.)

Gilder describes Allie as "an innocent, a tabula rasa." Yet when she reacts with simple confusion to a situation she does not understand, Gilder scoffs that Allie is "too good" for the rest of us. So according to the critic, the "tabula rasa" is also a first-degree snob. Gilder concludes that Allie "decided never to grow up," despite the evidence that, rather, she was forced to grow up too fast (she showed markedly precocious talent in music and entered college several years early). Her speech, Gilder sneers, is "just this side of baby-talk":

> Allie. Could I have known you in another life? (A friend) believes in that.
> Barrett. I don't think so.
> Allie. Then why is it that I live this life as if it were a dream and as if any minute I might wake up and find myself in my real life?

Gilder must be acquainted with some unusually articulate (and reflective) infants.

Gilder claims that this kind of "childishness" is characteristic of the way Percy romanticizes the mentally ill in his novels. He points out that the neurotic heroine of Percy's first novel, *The Moviegoer,* was so overcome by life that she became a "helpless woman-child" whose only hope lay in rescue by the "manly hero." This made me wonder how long ago Gilder read *The Moviegoer.* This is the first time I've heard the well-meaning but inept Binx Bolling described as a "manly hero."

Even so, why is it "romanticized" for a weaker person to become dependent on a stronger one? Why is Gilder so appalled at the idea of Will Barrett or Binx Bolling undertaking the detailed guidance of a lost soul, as if he were undertaking to care for a child? The idea is not a new one in literature, nor is it one necessarily identified with poor writing (cf. *Inferno* XXIII: "come'l maestro mio per quel vivagno/portandosene me sovra'l suo petto,/come suo figlio, non come compagno.")

More importantly, if Gilder wanted to discuss the depiction of mental illness in Percy's novels, he might have at least mentioned the highly sophisticated portrait of insanity found in *Lancelot* (1973), instead of limiting his comparison to a first novel published twenty years ago. Indeed he might have noticed that all of Percy's novels deal with severe neuroses, that these neuroses always take the form of a compelling feeling of emptiness and a desire to find "real life," that the search of the neurotic is simply a more focused description of the search of all the characters in Percy's books, and that the Life they search for is Christ.

Which brings us to the real problem with Gilder's review. Having a) missed the point and b) failed to do his Required Reading, Gilder proceeds to his main charge, that the philosophy behind Percy's fiction is so weak, so infantile, that the author would do better to leave it out of his novels entirely.

This is an astounding suggestion. How could any writer follow it? But especially for Percy, the separation of philosophy from fiction is unthinkable. Gilder does not understand this special inseparability, for the simple reason that he does not know what Percy's philosophy is.

Gilder is under the impression that the "language theory" Percy discusses in *The Message In The Bottle* constitutes the underlying philosophy of his fiction. Here again I wonder how closely Gilder read the material involved. How could he have missed the following passage from one of the essays in the *Message* collection, "Notes For A Novel About the End of the World"? (cf. "the second coming"?):

> As it happens, I speak in a Christian context. That is to say . . . my world view is informed by a certain belief about man's nature and destiny *which cannot fail to be central to any novel I write.*

Christian questions pervade *The Second Coming.* Will Barrett's daughter is a born-again Christian; his late wife was a devout Episcopalian; Barrett himself is obsessed with the question of God's existence. When he conducts his great experiment to settle the question once and for all, he finds . . . Allie. At the end of the book, Barrett begins to piece things together:

> Is (Allie) a gift and therefore a sign of a giver? Could it be that the Lord is here . . . ? Am I crazy to want both, her and him? No, not want, must have. And will have.

If anyone wishes to find God, he must begin his search where he is: in the world God gave him. The Savior's name, after all, was Emmanuel—"God is with us." The Christian finds Christ in his fellow man, or he doesn't find him at all. And he cannot love one without loving the other.

This is the Christian philosophy that gives shape and meaning to the search for real Life in *The Second Coming,* and in the body of Percy's writings. But Gilder does not even make an attempt to discuss it. Did he not notice? Did he find it silly? The "language theory" he mentions illuminates Percy's thoughts about writing, but it is not the sort of thing that motivates fiction.

I have no doubt that Gilder's reactions to *The Second Coming* are sincere. But they are more befitting a private reader than a public critic. Taste must only be honest; criticism must also be informed and fair. Gilder's is neither. As a reader, he has reacted unfavorably. As a critic, he has acted irresponsibly. *The*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Second Coming and its author deserve better.

—Susan Tunney
Alexandria, Virginia

Joshua Gilder replies:
I hope I shall always respond to literature as an amateur (in the best sense of the word); professionalism here seems particularly out of place. I would much rather read Miss Tunney's passionate and heart-felt opinions, though they be of a "private reader," than the supposedly more informed opinions of professional critics. Critics are sheep, most of them, always keeping an insecure eye on the movements of the rest of the reviewing flock, fearful lest they express an—oh my god!—original opinion, and suddenly find themselves terribly alone. Generally one is faced with reading reviews not of novels but of reputations (and it's fairly easy to predict, even without having seen the book in question, which way the flock will turn). That's why critics are always at least one or two books behind. Just as the isolated or unexpected example of genius goes ignored—because who, after all, was there to warn them it was coming—it's almost impossible for certain authors at certain points in their careers to get a negative review. It was the rare critic indeed who pointed out that Joan Didion's latest, *The White Album,* was a compilation of that author's worst indulgences; that Tom Wolfe's admittedly virtuosic *The Right Stuff* was a lifeless technical display compared to his earlier work; and that *The Second Coming* was just plain sad. (Once in a while it's amusing, as with the reviews of Graham Greene's *The Bomb Party,* to see the critics feverishly trying to explain away a bad book from one of the gods of the literary pantheon. Sure this *appears* to be silly, superficial stuff, but he must have *intended* it that way.)

Though many reviewers mentioned Will Barrett's previous incarnation in *The Last Gentleman,* not one, including myself and, apparently, Miss Tunney, had much to say about it. One is necessarily selective when writing a review of less than 1,500 words. I didn't attempt, indeed it would have been foolish to attempt in such a confined space, a comprehensive analysis of Percy's entire oeuvre. What I tried to do was show how certain features endemic to his writing, and apparent from the first, have had a debilitating, almost paralyzing effect on his latest work.

I wouldn't pass off *The Moviegoer* as a "first novel written twenty years ago." *The Moviegoer* and *Lancelot* are to my mind Percy's most fully realized and successful novels. But I find nothing in *Lancelot* (one should be wary of mistaking bleakness for sophistication), or *Love in the Ruins* or *The Last Gentleman,* to contradict my observations about Percy's dishonest approach to insanity. Needless to say, the passage quoted by Miss Tunney on the aftereffects of electroconvulsive treatment only supports my point. Here are the big bad psychiatric beasties mistreating poor little Allie (they've as much as raped her, for goodness sake). It does not speak to the experience of insanity itself, an experience which is unfailingly whitewashed and prettified in *The Second Coming.*

Where is the pain in Allie's experience; where is the horror? Christianity doesn't mean glossing over uncomfortable realities with an affected "good feeling" or "brotherly love"; it demands that one face the brutalities of life because only through that is redemption possible. To cut pain and suffering out of the picture falsifies the whole thing—like the liberal theologians who promise their congregations heaven but forget to mention hell. Percy at his best (which is rare in *The Second Coming*)

If you haven't read these...your commodities trading is riskier than necessary!

The American Board of Trade spot and forward exchange and marketplace, with its unblemished record of operations since 1969, is dedicated to the following propositions:

(1) Individual investors and hedgers should have access to trading opportunities, usually available only to the large corporations and institutions;
(2) they should be able to invest effectively with moderate capital;
(3) they should be protected against the abuses of the old line commodities exchanges;
(4) they should have trading programs and facilities responsive to their individual specific needs;
(5) they should not have to run the risk of default and court action inherent in the old line futures markets.

Therefore, we offer the above brochures describing the following ABT markets and investment mediums and invite you to send for any or all of them.

The ABT Commodity Ownership Guaranty Plan
The ABT is the only commodity exchange to warrant that the spot market gold and silver bullion, silver coins, platinum, copper or plywood you contract for is held specifically in your name and guarantees delivery. (Remember what happened to investors on the old line exchanges during the recent silver debacle when they asked for delivery?)

ABT Spot and Forward Foreign Currency Markets
Now you can own foreign currency contracts for as little as $400 margin in Swiss francs, German marks, Japanese yen, British pounds and Canadian dollars. No bid-ask price spreads, no price skids, no limit days...and the ABT has floor specialists to protect you against wild price swings.

ABT Foreign Currency "Baskets" Contracts
Only the ABT offers a unique balance of Swiss francs, German marks, British pounds, Canadian dollars and Japanese yen combined in a single forward contract. This program, available on a managed or unmanaged basis, helps protect your strategy against the fast-changing economic factors and unexpected events which make our times so difficult for the moderate investor.

ABT Commercial Paper
Up until now this medium (little known to the moderate investor) has been dominated by large corporations and institutional investors. The ABT now makes it possible for you to participate in this lucrative medium in denominations as low as $250.

Short Term U.S. Treasury Bills for as Little as $1,000
The ABT offers important flexibility safety and tax advantages over every other T-Bill and/or money market program. And you can invest in denominations of $1,000, $5,000 and $10,000. Compare the ABT program with any bank CD or money market fund.

T-Bill Forward Contracts Free of Default Risk
Now you can deal in T-Bill forwards (contracts which have already been issued) rather than the T-Bills futures (contracts which haven't been issued yet) offered by the other exchanges. On forward contracts there can be no default (less risk means better prices). And you can trade in units of $100,000 rather than the $1,000,000 units required on futures contracts.

Send for These Brochures at No Obligation
Find out about ABT's unmatched trading programs and markets for investors and hedgers. You will receive complete details on contract prices, commissions and investment approaches at no obligation.

The American Board of Trade
The National Spot and Forward Exchange and Marketplace
9 South William Street, New York, NY 10004
Protecting the Commodity Investor Since 1969 • Over 100 Members Nationwide • Floor Specialists to Make Orderly Markets • No Floor Trading by Members for Own Accounts • No Bid/Ask Price Spreads • No Split Opening or Closing Range • Always a Single Price • No Limit Days • Always a Market • Customer Reserves Invested in High Yield Treasury Bills • Monthly Statements • Accurate Statistics of Actual Prices

Please send me the following brochures:
☐ ABT Commodity Ownership Guaranty for gold, silver coins, platinum, copper and plywood.
☐ Foreign Currency Market
☐ Foreign Currency "Basket"
☐ ABT Commercial Paper
☐ Short Term U.S. Treasury Bills
☐ Forward Market in T-Bills

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State_____ Zip_____
TAS-1

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is aware of this. Note Barrett's revulsion with Preacher Curl's plans for a "Love and Faith" community. Still, it's interesting to note that Barrett's final solution, though without the religious overtones, is just as cloyingly sentimental. The Christianity Percy talks of in his essays is another one of those promising ideas he fails ever to explain. I always assumed he was dealing here more on the level of affect than idea, or on a holistic level that wasn't pertinent to philosophical dissections, one that could only be adequately dealt with in novel form. A positive example of this in *Second Coming* (as I pointed out in my review) is Percy's compassionate and knowing treatment of Jack Curl, a character who on the surface is almost insupportable. As to the rest, I would think one might want to reconsider a Christianity such as Percy's that more often than not finds expression in insanity and infantile regression. In my review, I purposefully avoided giving direct quotations of Allie's baby talk (though I may not always be fair, I try to be discreet). But my hand has been forced:

"Kissing you is a delight but not a rounded and closed-off delight," she said.
"No?"
"No, it is an opening-out delight and a wanting. Kissing is like now fine, more is better, and what about it?"
"I know."
"Your tongue is welcome but you, that is the salient you, would be even more so."
"I know, I know."
"Was there ever such wanting?" she asked.
"Not that I remember."
"For true?"
"For true."
. . . when she came against him from the side, it was with the effect of flying up to him from below like a little cave bat and clinging to him with every part of her. . . .
"Oh my," she said.
"Yes."
"That's you for true."
"Yes."
. . . "I don't believe this," she said. "I don't."
"*It's true*," he said.
"Oh my, what is happening? I think I'm going to have a fit."
"Yes."
"What's going to happen?"
"You're going to have a fit."

I think it's downright unfair to try to pin this on Dante.

For all I know I may be unique in this, but Binx Bolling always struck me as "manly," if a bit distracted. In fact the virility of Percy's male antagonists (yes, even including the impotent Lancelot) has been their most appealing quality—which just makes Will Barrett's Second Childhood all the more disappointing.

Finally, Miss Tunney, the way I read it, if I tell you electroshock is *not* my idea of romance, you'll give me your phone number. I appreciate the offer. But perhaps we should continue this discussion in the personals column:

Unread, non-professional heathen seeks scrappy literary type for late night religious discussions. . .

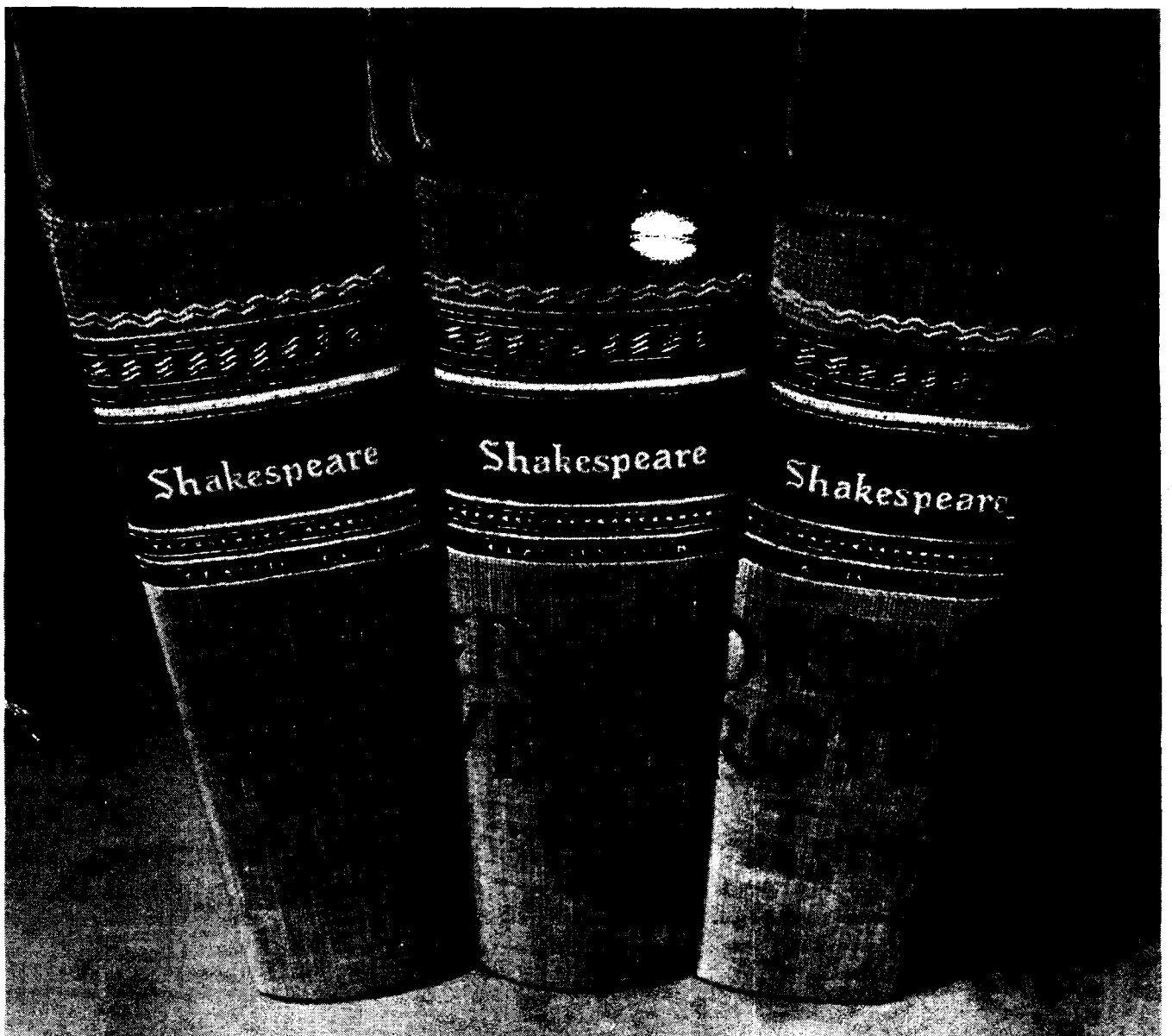
An Inordinate Fear of Labor? I

It is truly distressing when one finds it necessary to take issue with the venerable Sidney Hook on *any* issue. It is particularly regrettable to have to do so on this occasion, inasmuch as the correction which I must make is addressed to his otherwise excellent review of Norman Podhoretz's *The Present Danger* (September 1980).

The objectionable—indeed the downright erroneous—statement follows:

. . . the fact is that the most embattled defenders of the values of a free society and the policy of resolute defense against the expansion of Soviet totalitarianism . . . have been the members of the organized labor movement of the United States—the AFL-CIO.

(Continued on page 36.)



Now you can own it all.

Everything Shakespeare ever wrote.

Every comedy. Every tragedy. Every historical drama. Every epic and romantic poem. Every finely-chiseled sonnet.

They're yours in three handsome volumes for only $1.00, as your introduction to The Classics Club.

The Classics Club is quite unlike any other book club. It doesn't offer best sellers that come and go. Instead, it offers its members a chance to stay young through great books that will never grow old.

These books include Utopia by Thomas More; the wisdom of Plato, Aristotle and Marcus Aurelius; Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography; Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat; Walden by Thoreau; and other fresh, spontaneous even outspoken works that stretch your mind and sweep away the mental cobwebs that hold back most men.

You never have to buy any of these books. (To force you to buy a classic would be barbaric.) Take only those books you really want to own. And, at any time, you may cancel your membership, without penalty or hurt feelings.

The selections themselves are remarkable values. They're carefully printed on expensive paper stock. They're hard-bound in matched wheat-colored buckram, worked and stamped in crimson, black, and 23-karat gold.

And through direct-to-the-public distribution, we are able to offer our members these deluxe editions for only $7.39 each, plus shipping.

Interested? We'll send you the complete works of Shakespeare, Volume I, containing all his Comedies, Volume II, the Historical Dramas, Volume III, the Tragedies and Poems. Over 1300 pages in three matched Classics Club volumes. All three (regularly $22.17) for only $1.00, plus shipping.

We're betting that once you savor the words and thoughts that made Shakespeare the most quoted author of all time, you'll want to stay in the Club so you can meet some of the other great story tellers, philosophers, poets, and historians who, like Shakespeare, have lit our way and helped us to see life more clearly.

Don't send any money now. We'll bill you later. Just fill in the coupon now, while the invitation still stands.

THE CLASSICS CLUB
ROSLYN, N.Y. 11576

Please enroll me as a member and send me at once the complete works of Shakespeare. I enclose *no money now*. After a week's examination, I will either keep my books and pay $1 (plus shipping) or return them. As a member, I will get a complete list of titles from which to select the books I want. For each volume I choose, I pay only $7.39 (plus shipping). I may return any book for full credit within 21 days and I may cancel my membership at any time. (Books shipped in U.S.A. and Canada only.)

THE CLASSICS CLUB, ROSLYN, N.Y. 11576 1-MB

Mr./Mrs./Ms.

Street CO1D3C

City State Zip

Note: Members accepted in U.S.A. and Canada only; offer slightly different in Canada.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE PUBLIC POLICY

AN EVEN MORE DISMAL SCIENCE

by Andy Stark

Connoisseurs of the subject by now will have noticed the emergence of three genres in contemporary political economy, genres which correspond roughly to those three great mental blocks—conservatism, liberalism, and socialism—which between them have divided up most of Western political thought. This identification of political economy with political philosophy may be easily made in the following way:

The conservative political economist is the one who sleepily seats himself at his kitchen table in the morning and reaches for the box of Cheerios, whereupon his eyes turn misty, his limbs tingle, and his heart becomes surrounded by a warm and comforting glow as he contemplates the miracle that is his box of Cheerios. Through his mind pass all of the uncoordinated efforts of wheat farmer, advertising agent, trucker, lumberman, nutritionist, tycoon, grocery clerk, and, yes, trade union organizer, which, without direction or plan, have somehow, inexplicably, combined in the market to produce the Cheerios which our conservative political economist sees before him in ever fuzzier form as his eyes grow progressively misty.

The liberal political economist, a lighter because more troubled sleeper than our friend the conservative, rises early, nervously seats himself in front of his box of Cheerios, and wonders, given that there are severe limits to growth and social tradeoffs, whether his grandchildren will ever be able to sit down in front of a box of Cheerios. This thought leads him to further concerns that the efficient production of his box of Cheerios occurred only at the expense of social equity, and to doubts about the capability of the market to produce anything efficiently in the first place, what with monopoly, oligopoly, externalities, transactions costs, signalling failures, managerial discretion, and so on. Guilt-ridden, he leaves the house without eating breakfast.

Finally, the socialist political economist arrives in his kitchen, espies his box of Cheerios, and, like the nononsense intellectual he is, immediately fixes his mind on two concerns: First, in order to justify morally his private appropriation of them, he must ascertain that Cheerios are not a means of production, as Sraffa would maintain, but merely a consumption good. Second, he must convince himself that the extra economic power he possesses by virtue of his ownership of the box of Cheerios will not enable him to influence the political process unjustly and inequitably, thereby adding to plutocracy and diminishing democracy. Satisfied that he is clean on both counts, the socialist eats heartily and then catches the bus to the factory.

I have provided these brief character sketches because it is important to understand the intellectual personalities at play before going on to consider the following questions which must be asked about any new book on political economy: First, is the author offering anything new to his particular genre; second, does he squarely and successfully address the other genres? Thomas Sowell's *Knowledge and Decisions** is written largely in the tradition of conservative political economy (Sowell mentions on page 3 "the complex economic processes which bring a slice of bread and a piece of butter to your plate at breakfast"), and it adds original and creative insights and approaches to the conservative doctrine. *Knowledge and Decisions* is also fairly successful in its frequent assaults on liberal political economy; but, like most of its genre, it does not even address the major socialist critique. (Of course, this wrong is "righted" by the socialist political economist's neglect of the conservative critique).

The concern of the conservative, particularly in his debate with the liberal, is with the appropriate division of social decision-making between government and the market; as Sowell notes, "The most basic decision of all is *who* shall decide." There are several criteria upon which such a division could be based; conservatives traditionally have favored the somewhat amorphous standard of efficiency, arguing that for most social decisions, the market, and not government, renders the most efficient outcome. In response, (as the pre-prandial deliberations of the liberal political economist demonstrate), liberals first of all maintain that the market has inefficiencies of its own, and second, that any market solution always assumes an initial distribution of income and wealth. This latter point essentially renders efficiency an arbitrary standard because there are as many efficient market solutions to trading as there are possible initial distributions of resources.

With respect to the first liberal concern, conservatives have been quite successful in demonstrating that market efficiency is in most cases superior to government efficiency. The salutary feature of Sowell's contribution is his virtuoso ability to cast the debate in terms other than those found in conventional debates over efficiency: Instead of analyzing maxima, minima, optima, and other things that don't really exist, Sowell speaks of the efficient use of knowledge and information, and masterfully applies his analysis to disparate fields of social endeavor. Sowell's basic principle is that there exists in society a network or segment which is possessed of the best (though not necessarily ideal) knowledge relevant to any social decision, and that *that* network or segment should make *that* decision.

As Sowell himself points out, this in itself is not a novel thought; F.A. Hayek is the intellectual godfather of *Knowledge and Decisions*. Sowell's contribution to conservative political economy comes, first, in his revival and reintroduction of Hayek's principle into the debate over the relative

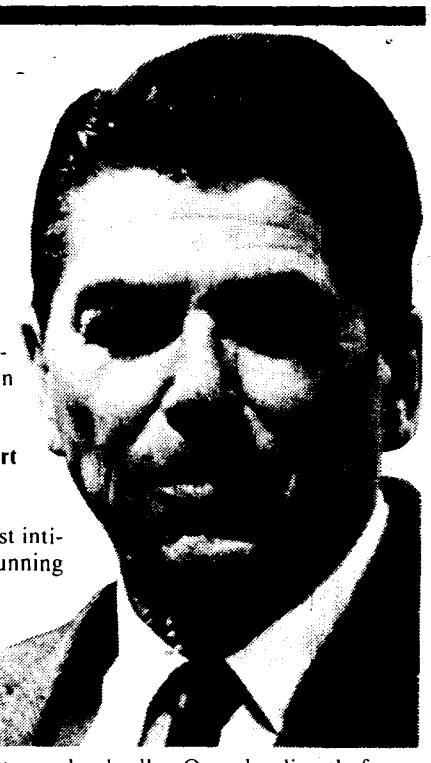
Andy Stark is a graduate student in the Department of Government at Harvard University.

*Basic Books, $18.50.

A Brilliant New Book for All America

The Future Under President Reagan

Inside Exclusive from the New Conservative Majority.



- **A major publishing event** as dramatic as Election-Day results. As necessary for the American people as the mandate for change.
- A prediction of key changes—many of them already in the works—from **Jack Kemp, Robert Carleson, Lt. Gen. Daniel O. Graham** and others.
- **The inside story** from political specialists most intimate with Ronald Reagan. People who'll be running your government.

The Future Is Now!

The Future Under President Reagan/ ISBN 0-87000-504-9/ $12.95 cloth

Happening now at your bookseller. Or order directly from:

ARLINGTON HOUSE/PUBLISHERS

Dept. R, 333 Post Road West, Westport, Connecticut 06880

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

efficiency of markets and governments, and second, in his elaborate analysis of the different information-gathering and decision-making capabilities of market and government; an analysis which provides a set of criteria for "who shall decide."

Essentially, Sowell tranforms Hayek's principle, namely, that not all knowledge need be consciously comprehended by the appropriate decision-maker (agents in the government or the market), for such knowledge can be embedded in the structure of incentives to which government and market habitually respond. And, Sowell concludes, in most cases, the market, not government, is better adapted to handle decisions.

After having the terms of debate essentially rerouted from his favorite complaints about monopoly, externalities, and other annoyances, to questions about the relative sagacity of government and market, our friend the liberal political economist may find it more difficult to defend the efficiency of governmental decision-making in most cases. There does, however, remain the liberal complaint of the inequity of market distribution; and here, recasting the debate in terms of knowledge and decisions does not greatly assist conservative political economy.

As Hayek points out in "The Uses of Knowledge in Society" (the contribution which is the seed of *Knowledge and Decisions*), the problem of "who shall decide" is not only one of knowledge and information, but also one of preferences. Both Hayek and Sowell praise the market's ability to enable actors to make the "right" decision without possession of all knowledge of the *causes* of a particular situation (i.e., we do not need to know the causes of a tin shortage in order to respond to higher tin prices by conservation, substitution, and so on.) But is it correct to say that the "right" decision is made in the absence of complete knowledge of certain *consequences* of that decision? In other words, by paying more for tin, am I saying not only how much I value tin, but that I want tin moguls to become millionaires? Am I communicating not only *information* regarding the optimal allocation of resources to tin production, but my *preferences* regarding the distribution of income as well? The latter seems doubtful: Despite the fact that Hayek (and presumably Sowell) acknowledge the pertinence of preferences as well as knowledge and information, they do not take into account society's preferences regarding social welfare in establishing criteria for the market-government division.

To make this clearer, one can examine the following argument from *Knowledge and Decisions:* Sowell maintains that government-controlled distribution of income according to need or merit would be to distribute wealth according to "some unitary scale of values applied by some observer(s)," whereas to "reward output (as does the market) is to reward tangible results as assessed by those actually using the output, in light of their own respective, diverse preferences." And Sowell sees nothing to be gained from the substitution of the former for the latter.

What can be gained from such a substitution is an effective role for the social welfare preferences of a society, and it is government, not the market, which better expresses these. What if a consensus on a unitary scale of values deems the state of a person's health, and not his output, to be the appropriate standard upon which we decide whether or not he receives health care? As Kenneth Arrow notes, decision-making according to what Sowell calls a "unitary scale of values" (a term which possesses unnecessary author-

CUSTOMER INFORMATION FROM GENERAL MOTORS

HOW TO FOIL A CAR THIEF

A FEW SIMPLE PRECAUTIONS CAN REDUCE THE RISK OF THEFT

The numbers are staggering. Every 37 seconds or so a car is stolen somewhere in the U.S. That adds up to almost 800,000 cars a year. But you can do something to keep your car from becoming a statistic. Start by avoiding these four common parking mistakes.

The "Just for a Minute" Syndrome. When you leave your car, even if it's "just for a minute," lock all of the doors and take your keys. In fact, about one of every five cars stolen was left unattended with keys in the ignition. Keep driver's license and vehicle registration cards in your wallet or purse. If a car thief finds these documents in the vehicle's glove box, he can impersonate you if stopped by the police.

The Isolated Location. It's safest to park in a locked garage, but if you can't, don't leave your car in a dark, out-of-the-way spot. Instead, try to park on a busy, well-lighted street. Thieves shy away from tampering with a car if there's a high risk of being spotted.

The Display Case. There's nothing more inviting to a thief than expensive items lying in your car, in plain sight. If you lock these items in the trunk or glove box, there's less incentive for a thief to break in. Also, when you park in a commercial lot or garage, be cautious. Lock your valuables in the trunk, and leave only the ignition key with the attendant.

The Space at the End of the Block. In recent years, professional car-theft operations have become an increasing problem. Unlike amateurs, the professionals are not easily deterred. Cars parked at the end of a block are easy targets for the professional thief with a tow truck. So, it's best to park in the middle of the block. Be sure to turn your steering wheel sharply to one side or the other. That will lock the steering column and prevent the car from being towed from the rear.

Unfortunately, there's no such thing as a "theft-proof" car. But at General Motors, we're equipping every car we build with anti-theft features. We want to help you make it as difficult as possible for any thief—amateur or professional—to steal your car.

This advertisement is part of our continuing effort to give customers useful information about their cars and trucks and the company that builds them.

General Motors

People building transportation to serve people

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

itarian connotations) can be based on human sympathy (a term which needn't carry "patronizing connotations"); and sympathy, according to Arrow, "operates better in an institution, such as the government, designed to give some scope to expressing altruistic interests."

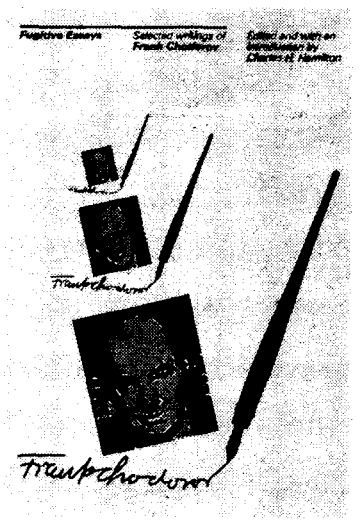
It would therefore appear that Sowell's reformulation of the debate between conservative and liberal political economy in terms of knowledge and decisions is successful in demonstrating the superior efficiency of market decision-making in most cases, but is unsuccessful in answering the liberal objection that social preferences or values cannot be effectively communicated in the market. This seems to be the time-tested outcome of debates between liberals and conservatives, and perhaps the moment has come to ask why that should be so.

The essential stonewall in contemporary political economic debate results from the fact that the conservative, in successfully illuminating the advantages of the market, believes that in so doing he has exonerated capitalism. In fact, however, the market and capitalism are to be evaluated on completely different dimensions, for the former is a system of exchange and the latter is a system of ownership. Thus, conservatives like Sowell have not justified capitalism and destroyed socialism; they have vindicated the market and undermined the command economy. (Conservatives often forget that the opposite of the market is not socialism, but the command economy—a fact to which any advocate of market socialism will attest.) Thus, the liberal is quite right in pointing out that the conservative political economist, in defending the efficiency of the market, has given us no reason to accept the social distribution that results from it.

The socialist political economist carries the liberal critique further, and thereby demonstrates that conservatives and socialists for the most part talk right past each other. First, he points to a further confusion in conservative political economy, namely, that conservatives believe that they have shown that minimum government and maximum market are necessary for *democracy;* when in fact, they have shown only that minimum government and maximum market are necessary for *liberalism.* For, as Hayek himself has noted, liberalism is the doctrine that governmental decision-making should be minimized, whereas democracy is a system wherein control over decision-making, no matter what the division between government and market, is equally distributed amongst the population. (Social democracy is democratic market control; political democracy is democratic governmental control.) Thus, while the conservative such as Sowell has shown that maximum market is advisable for a liberal political order, he has simply not addressed the question of whether democracy is compatible with capitalism. Similarly, in centering their concern around democracy and capitalism, socialists often believe that they have effectively applied the ABC's of socialist culture-criticism (Avarice, Banality, Cupidity) to liberalism and the market. In fact, they have done no such thing. This talking past each other paralyzes debate.

There is yet another communication gap between conservative and socialist. The *moral* challenge of our friend the socialist political economist —that there is no justification for private ownership of property and in particular of the means of production —is also not settled by defenses of the market. Indeed, the market is defended precisely because of its "non-morality": In *The Limits of*

LibertyPress
LibertyClassics



Fugitive Essays
Selected Writings of Frank Chodorov

Edited and with an Introduction
by Charles H. Hamilton

Frank Chodorov, the son of Russian immigrants, was an unyielding advocate of individual freedom. He taught at the Henry George School, edited *The Freeman,* and was Associate Editor of *Human Events* and *National Review.*

These essays, collected for the first time in book form, contain Chodorov's thoughts on war, peace, communism, the State, capitalism, public education, politicians, and many other topics. Their connecting theme is the promotion of individual liberty in a chaotic world. Hardcover $9.00, Paperback $4.00.

We pay postage, but require prepayment, on orders from individuals. Please allow four to six weeks for delivery. To order this book, or for a copy of our catalog, write:
Liberty*Press*/Liberty*Classics*
7440 North Shadeland, Dept. A41
Indianapolis, Indiana 46250

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Liberty, James Buchanan praises the market because neither he nor his watermelon vendor need know or care about the other's moral worth in order for Mr. Buchanan to purchase his watermelons. Sowell likewise notes that the economic optimality of the market has nothing to do with moral justification. Unfortunately, while the market may be able to stand on non-morality, it is far more difficult for capitalism to do so.

Ironically, one of Sowell's most bitter critics would probably be Ayn Rand, who has excoriated her ideological kinfolk for abandoning moral defenses of capitalism. Rand, at least, holds out the hope that there may exist such moral defenses for capitalism, a hope which is not in the least fulfilled by nonmoral defenses of the market. Again, conservative and socialist talk past each other.

Will the conservative, liberal, and socialist political economists ever be able to sit down at the breakfast table and reason together? Or, like stale spouses marinated in the brackish backwaters of their marriage, will they continue to talk past one another over the very breakfast cereal which has become emblematic of their failure to communicate? Will conservatives continue to purvey non-moral defenses of the market, while liberals and socialists sail on by with moral assaults on capitalism? Will conservatives persist in praising the market's decision-making capabilities, while liberals and socialists hurl assaults on capitalism's compatibility with "true" social preferences? Will conservatives remain infatuated with the importance of the market to a liberal political order, while liberals and socialists stand mesmerized by the incompatibility between capitalism and democracy?

There may be two ways out: First, political economists steeped in historical understanding could bring to bear diverse insights on the topic gleaned from specific historical analysis (after all, one needn't be a "nominalist" to wonder whether, in addition to maxima, minima, and optima, there exist such things as liberalism, democracy, capitalism, and socialism). And second, as more and more talent is applied to the contemporary problems of political economy which hamstring the Western world, it may come to be discovered that the new answers to our new problems (contrary to J.K. Galbraith's recent asseveration in the *New York Review of Books,* we can no longer remain content with simply asking the right questions) may arise from rushing in where political economists have hitherto failed to tread. For example, on those rare occasions when conservatives address the moral questions of capitalism, a product such as George Gilder's just-published *Wealth and Poverty*† is the outcome; when socialists scrutinize the market from a non-moral perspective, something like Kenneth Arrow's *The Limits of Organization*‡ results. Both of these contributions, which seem continuously to spin off insights (albeit far from incontestable ones), fuzzily converge on what may be the missing subject in diagnoses of Western economic problems: trust (Arrow) or faith (Gilder) and how to restore it. These two recent works are symbolic of what ideas remain to be discovered if only political economists begin to communicate; and the more they communicate, the greater will become the rewards and therefore the incentives to dialogue. □

†Basic Books, $16.95.

‡Norton, $3.95.

BILLY GOAT'S

by George Ertel

Chicago's Magnificent Mile is eleven blocks of Michigan Avenue, from the Wrigley Building and *Tribune* Tower north to fashionable Oak Street. Along the way are Tiffany's, Saks, Peacock's, I. Magnin, Elizabeth Arden's, Marshall Field's (in the three million square-foot Water Tower Place shopping extravaganza), and, perhaps in a year or so, Nieman-Marcus: the shops where the city's elegant folk spend $300 million annually. The hundred-story John Hancock Building and other skyscrapers along the Mile house advertising agencies, publishers, broadcasters. Visitors fill the 10,000 rooms offered by the Marriott, the Ritz-Carlton, the Drake, and other fine hotels.

Billy Goat Tavern and Grill is here, too. Well, not precisely *on* the Magnificent Mile: *under* it. There's a lower Michigan Avenue that connects to other subterranean streets in downtown Chicago—they're for delivery trucks, express buses, and cars that decline to compete with pedestrians. For everyone else, it's a service entrance; for Billy Goat's, a front door.

George Ertel is a market analyst in Chicago.

Just watch out for the pigeons. They roost on the pillars that keep upper Michigan upper and on the railings of the staircase leading down from the sunlight. Stanley used to sit on the steps along with the pigeons—Stanley the wino—until one of the *Tribune*'s pudgy little reporters' human-interest stories got him hauled off to a suburban rehabilitation center. But even without Stanley as a landmark, you won't miss Billy Goat's.

First there's the red, yellow, and green mural of the Goat on the street-side wall. And just around the corner, extending from above the red door is the carved wood sign: BILLY GOAT'S TAVERN est. 1934.

In 1934, Billy Goat's was a couple of miles west, just across the street from the Chicago Stadium. Bill Sianis, who had come from Greece to Chicago 25 years earlier with five dollars in his pocket, hustled newspapers (among other things) until he had—another five-dollar bill. This fin, though, was for investing. One Friday night, Sianis bought the bar with that five dollars and two checks for $100 each. (By the following Monday morning, he had poured enough beer to keep the checks from bouncing.)

Being close to the Stadium, Billy Goat's was the watering hole of professional athletes. That made it a hangout for reporters, too. One afternoon, a billy goat fell off a passing truck and wandered into the saloon. A patron—occupation: barrister—convinced Billy Goat Sianis that adopting the goat would be nothing less than appropriate, so the goat became a regular, too.

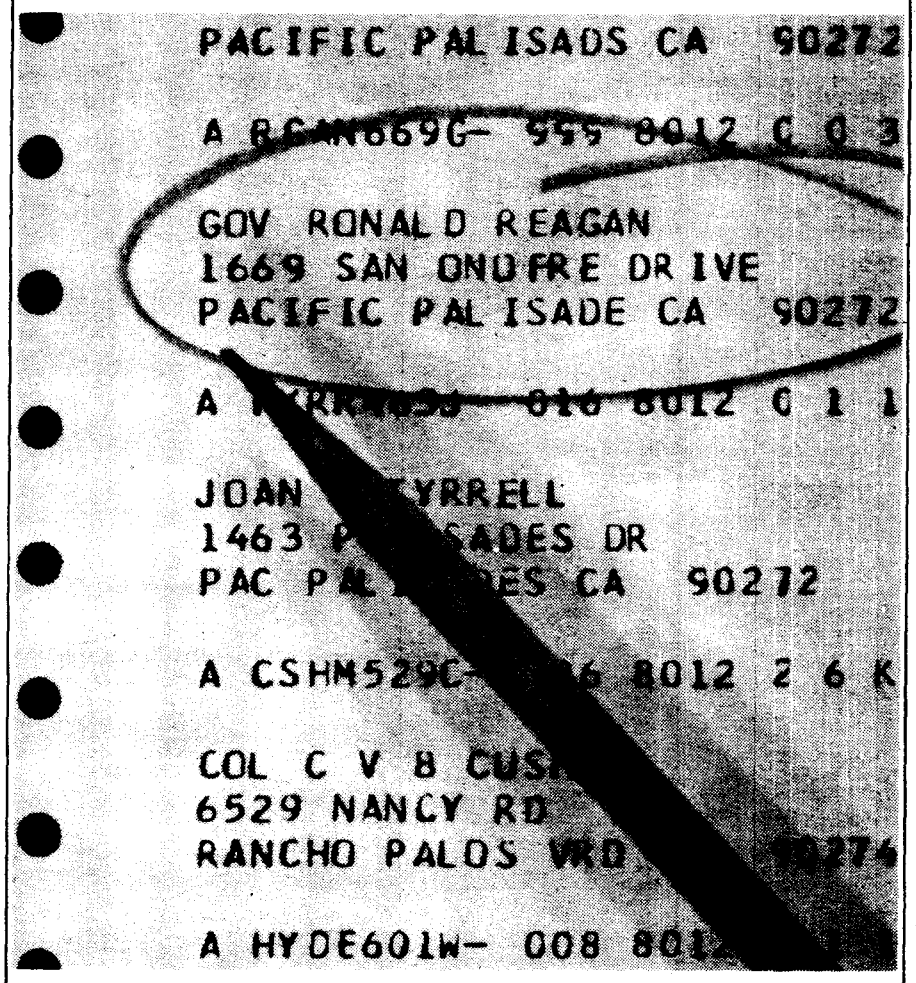
Lest you think that this goat was mere whimsy, why, think again. The billy goat became, well, like a son to Billy Goat. Billy took Billy to the 1960 Republican Convention—smuggled him past security in an ABC bag. When the goat was thrown out of Wrigley Field after Billy Goat had bought them two box seats for the 1945 World Series, Billy was so angered that he hexed the Cubs. They lost the Series; in fact, the team hasn't so much as won a National League Pennant since. Don't mess with the Goat.

A Calvert's salesman ignored that advice, got himself into a fight with Billy Goat, and his brand has not been sold in Billy Goat's Tavern from that day forward. Two signs at either end of the L-shaped bar inform customers that that booze will never again be poured in the establishment. Other announcements adorn the walls: "We reserve the right to *set* our patrons." "We will not cash any personal checks . . . not even mine!" "If you don't like the way I serve, the prices I charge, or the way I run this institution—then BUY ME OUT!" There is also a sign cautioning newspaper pressmen about getting the bar stools dirty.

The pressmen started coming to Billy Goat's when the saloon moved from the Stadium to its present location between the city's two newspapers. Reporters and columnists still frequent the place; blow-ups of their by-lines share wallspace with the anti-Calvert's signs. And below the by-lines are bowling trophies and photos of celebrities and notables—I recognize only Ohio Governor Jim Rhodes and gossip columnist Irv Kupcinet—and a chubby-legged Miss Greece— circa, I'll guess, 1952.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Who reads The American Spectator?



Ronald Reagan.

ALSO: Paul McCracken, Brock Yates, Albert Shanker, Ray Price, James Wechsler, John Roche, Lewis Lapham, Jude Wanniski, Jack Kemp, John Chamberlain, Edith Efron, Henry Salvatori, David Meiselman, Martin Peretz Jeff MacNelly, John Lukacs, William Rusher, Antonio Martino, Malcolm Muggeridge, Doris Grumbach, Colin Welch, Robert Bleiberg, William F. Buckley, Jr., Ben Wattenberg, Gen. A.C. Wedemeyer, James L. Buckley, Herb Stein, Roger Starr, Neal Kozodoy, Alan Reynolds, Walter Goodman, Harry Jaffa, William Safire, Charles Peters, Jeffrey Hart, Irving Kristol, David Packard, Henry Fairlie, Jean-Francois Revel, Richard M. Nixon, Robert Nisbet, Leonard Garment, Norman Mailer, Frank Shakespeare, Malcolm S. Forbes, Jr., Melvin Lasky, Norman Podhoretz, Anne Armstrong, James R. Schlesinger, Richard Whalen, Dana Andrews, Midge Decter, William E. Simon, Ernest van den Haag, James Q. Wilson, Lewis Lehrman, Woody Allen, Nathan Glazer, Fred Silverman, Thomas Murphy, William Proxmire, Suzanne Garment, Maj. Gen. George S. Patton III, Elliott Abrams, Patrick Buchanan, Patrick Cosgrave, John Lofton, Larry Flynt, M. Stanton Evans, Huntington Cairns, Eric Hoffer, James Jackson Kilpatrick, Tom Wolfe, William Randolph Hearst, Jr., Michael Kinsley, Tom Winter, Gerald R. Ford, Henry Regnery, Roger Rosenblatt, Richard Lugar, Anthony Harrigan, Robert L. Bartley, S.I. Hayakawa, Luigi Barzini, Nelson Polsby, Joseph Coors, Peregrine Worsthorne, Tom Charles Huston, Gertrude Himmelfarb, Clare Boothe Luce, Clay La Force, Roger Milliken, Edward Banfield, Victor Lasky, Raymond Aron, Roy Cohn, Joseph Hazan, Eugene V. Rostow, Michael Novak, Thomas Sowell, Gen. Alexander Haig, Randolph Richardson, George Will, Sidney Hook, Richard Perle, James Hitchcock, Philip Crane, Shmuel Moyal, Hugh Kenner, Fred Iklé, Tom Stoppard, Charlton Heston, Jim Fallows, Alan Abelson, Milton Friedman, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Senator Jake Garn, George W. Ball, J. Peter Grace, Jack Paar, Charles Horner, and many others.

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR, P.O. Box 1969, Bloomington, Indiana 47402

Please enter a
☐ new
☐ renewal subscription to
The American Spectator for one year (12 issues) for only $15.

☐ Payment enclosed
☐ Bill me later

PLEASE PRINT

Name

Address

City State Zip

X91

Well, hell. You don't go to Billy Goat's for glamour. Billy Goat's is simple. The drinks are cheap, the bar is formica, the floor is a checkerboard of black and white asphalt tile. You can sit at any of about three dozen tables, all laminated with red and white plastic to look like they've got tablecloths. And while you drink your beer, you can eat a sandwich and chips.

"Chizbuhgah chizbuhgah chizbuhgah no fries no fries." You've heard that on "Saturday Night Live." Billy Goat's is what they're talking about. Billy Goat, may he rest in peace, passed the torch to his nephew, Sam Sianis, and every noon Sam is behind the counter in the center of the room taking orders. Any sandwich you can grill; no french fries.

The biggest seller must be the double cheeseburger. Lunch for hundreds of Chicagoans daily is a double cheese (as we say), a 50 cent draft beer, and a bag of potato chips. You add to the burger to suit yourself at the condiment counter, then find a table. The room is always crowded around noon, but you can get a seat if you have good luck and fast reflexes.

Lynn always gets a seat. People make room for her, because no one is absolutely certain that her threat to dance on their table if they don't find another chair is just talk. Lynn discovered the Goat's while a student at a local secretarial college. Now Lynn works on the other side of the business district, but she's still a Friday night regular.

John drops in occasionally, after work or maybe in lieu of the second half of an evening MBA class at Northwestern. He can relax there with a couple of beers and a couple of buddies as he puts the events and issues of the day into manageable perspective.

Sun-Times columnist Mike Royko uses Billy Goat's in his work. Many of Royko's essays are set in the saloon, with patrons providing whatever insightful social commentary Mike wishes to put in their mouths. (Unfortunately, Billy Goat's puts no insightful social commentary in Mike—only beer—so his readers are lectured on the newly discovered sagacity of Jerry Brown, the man Royko previously called "Governor Moonbean," and on the anticipated failings of Ronald Reagan—Mr. President to you, Mike.)

Why is Billy Goat's so popular? Because of what it is, and also because of what it is not. What it is is an on-going press release. Owner Sam Sianis knows how to get Billy Goat's in the newspapers. Last August, when the Chicago White Sox were for sale, Sam was the first bidder to show money—$20. In September, Billy Goat's hosted a public relations event for an international backgammon tournament, thereby publicizing the saloon as well as the tournament. Lest patrons be unaware of Billy Goat's press celebrity, Sam has a "Wall of Fame" with blow-ups of newspaper articles illuminated with spotlights.

Such publicity-seeking is good-natured, though. What Billy Goat's is not is pretentious, nor is it trendy. Billy Goat's has no mechanical bull. No one ever tried to dance the Latin Hustle by the juke box. There are no waiters in tuxedos and no waitresses in fishnet stockings—if you want another beer, just ask the kid when he comes by. Billy Goat's is for people who can enjoy themselves without dependence upon the latest fashion, commercial titillation, or a facade of genteelness. Billy Goat's is a saloon for beer, burgers, and conversation.

When you come to Chicago, you may want to see the art institute, the museums of natural history and science and industry, the zoos. You may want to see some examples of Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture. Probably you'll go to the top of the Sears Building or the John Hancock and look over the city. After you've seen the sights, go see the people. Stop in for a drink at Billy Goat's. ☐

Plant a THINK TANK anywhere and watch the minds grow!

home-office-school-park-club-churches-laboratory

Unique instructional games designed by university professors to make learning fun through brain-to-brain action. Beginning games can be mastered by young children—final games will challenge intelligent adults. These are the famous GAMES FOR THINKERS from WFF 'N PROOF Publishers.

WFF 'N PROOF (logic)	13.00*
QUERIES 'N THEORIES (sci. & lang.)	13.00*
EQUATIONS (mathematics)	10.00*
ON-SETS (set theory)	10.00*
PROPAGANDA (social studies)	11.00*
ON-WORDS (word structures)	10.00*
CONFIGURATIONS (geometry)	6.75*
TRI-NIM (problem solving)	5.75*
REAL NUMBERS (arithmetic)	2.25*
WFF (beginner's logic)	2.25*
QWIK-SANE (topology puzzle)	2.25*
TAC-TICKLE (pure strategy)	1.75*
TEACHERS MANUAL	1.25*
MEDITATION GAME (pure strategy)	2.25*
THINKERS BOOKENDS	16.00*
Complete 13-Kit THINK TANK & Teachers Manual with Bookends	96.50*
without Bookends	86.50*

*includes postage and handling charges

Order from: **WFF 'N PROOF**

1490-CP South Blvd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Fully guaranteed. Dealer inquiries invited.

Gifts that are a COMPLIMENT to receive

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SHRINKING HISTORY: ON FREUD AND THE FAILURE OF PSYCHOHISTORY

David E. Stannard / Oxford University Press / $12.95

Joseph Adelson

This odd and unpleasant book begins with a small deception and goes on, as we shall see, to far greater ones. The small deception is its title, for the book is not really about psychohistory. What we have here is an overheated, biased, and largely ignorant attack upon psychoanalysis.

Too bad, for there is a good case to be made against psychohistory—one which has in fact been made by other scholars, most notably by Jacques Barzun in his elegant *Clio and the Doctors*. There is also a good case to be made against psychoanalysis, at least in its more canonical modes—and it is one I make myself, mentally, several times a day during the course of my clinical practice. But neither case can be made, or made well, given Stannard's fanaticism. Even one of the dust jacket blurbs warns that we may be "put off" by the author's "literal-minded, complacent skepticism." Literal-minded it is, and complacent it certainly is, but skepticism is not quite the word that comes to mind—dogmatism or arrogance, perhaps. Yet the problem we have with the book is not Stannard's temper and bias as much as it is the means employed to support them.

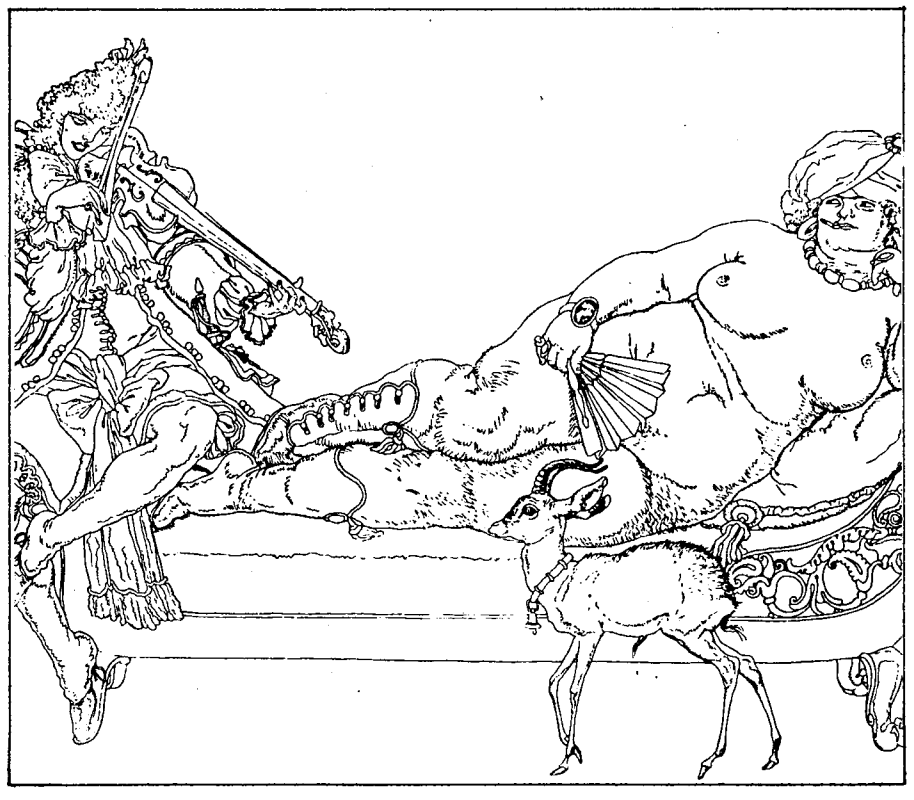
There is an irony here, since the case most would make against psychohistory would stress its selective, tendentious, at times unscrupulous use of evidence; and it is this very lack of scruple that marks Stannard's method. He seems to think of himself as a sort of Ralph Nader of the intellectual life, stamping out a particularly noxious form of consumer fraud, offering to intelligent laypeople—his word, not mine—the benefit of an expert, disinterested knowledge of both the logic and the empirical underpinnings of psychoanalysis.

Stannard's "research" consists of little more than a frantic foraging in various literatures hostile to psychoanalysis. Any disproof of any element of the Freudian doctrine is accepted as definitive; any evidence to the contrary simply goes unmentioned most of the time. Having fashioned so convenient a memory-hole for inconvenient information, Stannard lays about gleefully, scoring one spectacular forensic triumph after another. I was reminded of a poor lunatic man I knew in my childhood, who would spend his days standing on the street corner, debating imaginary opponents, and winning each and every argument.

Let me illustrate by giving some attention to what Stannard seems to feel is his strongest suit—his analysis of the empirical studies of the psychoanalytic theory. It is there we find the gravamen of the indictment, to wit, that the theory is false since it is empirically a "pipedream." Stannard's review of this literature is carried out with breathtaking self-assurance, and leads him to some equally breathtaking conclusions. He tells us, for example, there is no good evidence for the existence of defense mechanisms, he disputes the notion of the unconscious, he scoffs at the Oedipus complex. Since there is in fact a substantial body of research supporting all of these (and other) psychoanalytic ideas, one turns immediately to the index and bibliography to see whether any of it has been treated. Is Lloyd Silverman's work mentioned? It is not; yet that work could not be more relevant to Stannard's thesis. Silverman's ingenious experimental studies have shown that certain threatening stimuli, presented below the level of awareness, have a distinct and predictable effect upon behavior. In his best known studies, he and his associates have shown that competitive performance (dart throwing) is influenced by subliminal messages of an oedipal nature. An oedipally threatening message reduces performance and a reassuring one enhances it.

Silverman's work is meticulous; it has been replicated many times; and it is widely recognized as a significant and challenging body of research, in both method and outcome. Writing in the *Annual Review of Psychology*—the most reliable source book in our field—Nathan Brody terms these studies "the strongest body of evidence in favor of the psychoanalytic conception of the unconscious." That being so, why is it not mentioned? We do not ask Stannard to accept it, only to let the unwary reader know that it exists. Either he has never heard of Silverman's work (and Reyher's and Shevrin's, and many others in this one area of inquiry), which puts into question his competence; or he has indeed heard of it but ignores it since it spoils his argument, which of course puts into question his probity.

However we decide, the sad fact remains that Stannard consistently misrepresents the evidence, generally by omission. His discussion of orality and personality has no mention of Joseph Masling's series of about *thirty* supporting studies. The work of Rosenwald and others on anality is nowhere cited. And so it goes. There is now a substantial body of research linking paranoia to homosexual preoccupations. Stannard's handling of this work is close to a caricature of scientific reporting and critique. He discusses only two of the relevant studies and dismisses them scornfully on several grounds, one of which is that the subjects studied are drawn from a specific time and cultural setting—"the midwestern and northeastern United States in the early- and mid-1950s"—as though the same stricture does not apply to 99 percent of work in psychology. From this absurdity he goes on to state that the evidence does not amount to much in any case, since it shows only an association between paranoia and homosexuality, and not that the one is caused by the other. That is the textbook truism "correlation is not causation" we teach college freshmen, to caution them against fanciful generalization. What we teach college seniors is that in the real world of psychological research, it is nearly impossible to demonstrate causation, that to impose that demand seriously would mean that most social science would simply grind to a halt. It is a peculiar idea to be espoused by a historian, since it is hard to think of any historical study—including Stannard's own, of which more in a moment—which "proves" causality.



Joseph Adelson is professor of psychology and director of the Psychological Clinic at the University of Michigan.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One is offended throughout by the author's trading on the reader's credulousness. The book is addressed to the general reader, or to the historian, neither of whom can be expected to know much about the recondite, technically difficult literature of experimental psychodynamics. Those readers can only be guided —or misled—by the imprimatur provided by the author's credentials, and the reputation of the publisher. When one is told with consummate authority that there is, let us say, no evidence to support the concept of defense mechanisms, one can only take that statement on faith, especially so when contrary data are so resolutely concealed. One cannot even recognize that there is a debatable issue. The question of psychoanalysis as a science—the subject of a truly vast philosophical literature —is here reduced to an amateurish discussion of scientific logic (in the course of which we are gravely told about Ockham's razor), and the dropping of a few eminent names. The therapeutic merits of psychoanalysis—another vast area of research, theory, and disputation—are treated in similarly superficial fashion, relying on biased (and often outmoded) sources. The important work of Smith and Glass is nowhere mentioned.

One can imagine Stannard's response—that he did not have the space to treat these issues in scholarly detail, and that he is writing for "laypeople." Yet Barzun's book is about the same size, covers a wider terrain, is accessible to the general reader, and raises far more troubling questions about psychohistory. For that matter Gertrude Himmelfarb discusses these issues in greater depth in the course of a single essay on the history, written several years ago (*Commentary*, Jan. 1975). The problem here is not space, nor is it audience; the problem is intellectual attitude. Stannard is so overcome with contempt for psychoanalysis that he cannot imagine it as others do —as an intelligent, intricate, fallible, provisional body of ideas and observations, to be taken seriously if cautiously by intelligent people. He quotes approvingly a silly statement by the trendy P.B. Medawar that "psychoanalytic theory is the most stupendous intellectual confidence trick of the 20th century." He likens it to mesmerism, to phrenology, to Velikovsky, and to belief in ancient astronauts. Given that degree of scorn, one ought not to expect reasoned discourse, nor should we expect a useful discussion of the many troubling issues within the purview of psychology and history.

Consider: All biography—and much if not most historical writing—depends upon some theory, however tacit, of motivation, of personality structure, and of the connections between early and later experiences. It need not be Freudian theory, it need not even be a psychodynamic theory; but it is hard to imagine a biographer forswearing all reliance on psychology, however defined. If we set out to write a biography of Beethoven, we must give some attention to his eccentric behavior towards women, or even more so, the very nearly psychotic episode involving his sister-in-law and nephew. If we write biographically about Samuel Johnson, we must give some thought to his depressions, his tics and rituals, and their possible relation to the sad circumstances of his early life. I mention these great figures because they are the subjects of two of the best biographies written in our time: Maynard Solomon's *Beethoven*, and Jackson Bate's *Samuel Johnson*.

Both are, in a sense, psychobiographies, in that they employ psychoanalytic ideas to illuminate those extraordinary lives. Most of us would

OTHER MEDIA KEEP ON TOP OF EVENTS. REASON KEEPS AHEAD OF THEM.

Reason is a monthly magazine written for people who clearly understand the difference between being a leader, and being led around. It's for people who know that the difference is often just a matter of knowing what may happen and why . . . an informative function that Reason's monthly issues fill superbly for thousands of present Reason subscribers.

What are the advantages of being a Reason reader? Check the following list for yourself:

Caught up in the tax revolt, but worried about loss of services?
Reason foresaw today's move to cut back on the taxes supporting big government, and offered innovative ideas on doing more with less. The April 1972 issue discovered cities contracting with private firms in the competitive marketplace — the result was public services at less cost. If you find that kind of reporting of interest as you contemplate future tax bills, you should know that Reason is continuing to explore these trends in every issue.

Obsessed with a fear of flying?
Recently the media have discovered the FAA and its creaky safety enforcement mechanisms. To Reason readers it's an old subject, first explored in Reason's September 1969 issue. During the past year's disasters, Reason has published a major proposal for alternatives to the FAA — and detailed the safety records of both the airlines and the airplanes. As with other major concerns, Reason's readers can now fly with the percentages on their side!

Mail the coupon below to:
1129 State Street, Suite 4
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Tired of sitting in gas lines or trying to get on a plane?
In Reason's February 1971 issue readers were told of the massive energy crisis that was coming, why it would occur, and what the prudent person would plan for. Today Reason keeps on top of new energy developments, separating fact from fiction, breakthroughs from boondoggles.

Add Reason's intellectual insight to your life. A 12 issue monthly subscription is just $11.99—more than half off the single copy price, and a lot of reason for a bit less than a dollar a month . . . . see the guaranteed offer below.

Over 10 Years of Publication!

WE'LL GIVE YOU A REASON TO SUBSCRIBE...

If you agree with us that your dollars are likely to be worth less in the future, use your credit card or send a check with your order, and we'll give you 13 issues instead of the 12 offered above. Or, see your first Reason at our risk, and we'll bill you later for 12 monthly issues at $11.99 — either way, Reason's full Guarantee is yours on every future issue!

YES, I'll add Reason to my sources. Please send me:
☐ The next 13 issues for $11.99. ☐ My check is enclosed.
☐ Please charge my card # _____
Card type: ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercharge Expires _____
☐ The next 12 issues, and bill me for just $11.99 (still over half off!)

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

REASON'S GUARANTEE: If at any time Reason's issues do not meet your expectations, a full refund is yours for the asking. No questions, no qualification, no pro-rating for issues you have received. 4004

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

agree that they do so brilliantly, yet it is difficult to see how and why, given Stannard's belief that psychoanalysis is a confidence trick. Have Solomon and Bate—two of the great scholars of our time—both been taken in? If so, how were they able to overcome their having been deceived? In short, when are psychoanalytic modes of inference and interpretation persuasive and when not—what makes the difference? Although Stannard spends a great deal of time chortling about poor or outmoded examples—his exemplary specimen is Freud's hesitant, almost fanciful paper on Leonardo, written in *1910*—he carefully avoids examples more troubling to his thesis. Nor does he tell us what approaches to motivation the historian or biographer ought to take instead. There are the usual genuflections to science, but if we wait for scientific psychology, we will wait a long, long time—no significant branch of psychology is close to being scientific in any genuine sense, though pretensions of course abound. If the historian and biographer cannot turn to science, what does he use in its place? We get no inkling. The interesting questions are unanswered and unasked.

Such diffidence can be seen elsewhere. Stannard feels that psychohistorians generalize too easily from one culture or historical era to another, and to demonstrate the hazards of doing so, he reports—at great length—studies which show that some primitive tribes do not perceive optical illusions as we do. It is a strange argument. If we are merely being warned against fanciful extrapolations, that is a textbook truism. But the choice of so exotic an example—optical illusions among preliterate groups—suggests a radical cultural relativism, and that raises a great many difficult problems. Is he arguing, as he seems to be, against all cultural universals? If so, he is simply mistaken; any anthropologist will tell him, happily, that such universals not only exist, they are quite common. The question is whether they are heuristic, that is, useful in anthropological analysis.* Does he mean that we can make no extrapolations from era to era and culture to culture? If so, why can an intelligent high school student pick up Jane Austen and read her with sympathy and understanding? Why am I able to enter empathically the world of *Genji,* written a thousand years ago, about a totally different culture? In fact, we can at this time make as strong a case for psychological universals—for fundamental similarities in thought, the structure of language, emotion, and so on—as we can for transcultural and transhistorical differences. But one cannot discuss the issue at all when one is seized by an adversarial demon.

Upon finishing this book I became curious about Stannard's own historical writing. Does he—can he—practice what he preaches? Does he indeed eschew dynamic psychology? Is he careful to avoid generalizing from one era or society to another? The book that made Stannard's reputation is *The Puritan Way of Death,* published in 1977; and the reader who comes upon it after *Shrinking History* is in for a series of shocks, for the author commits each and every "error" he now inveighs against. The older book opens with a respectful citation of Sigmund Freud, who is quoted on the unconscious—now seen as a fiction. Somewhat later Stannard relies upon the work of John Bowlby, the well-known psychoanalyst. Bowlby is praised for his "almost classic" studies of separation anxiety—a psychoanalytically derived idea. Furthermore, Bowlby's (and others') studies of separation fear, carried out on twentieth-century youngsters, are used quite casually (and to my mind effectively) to analyze the anxieties of seventeenth-century Puritan children—another violation of Stannard's dogma 1980.

Whatever accounts for this rather abrupt shift in Stannard's outlook, it has not served him well, to judge by the sharp decline in quality between the two books. Stannard's book on the Puritan was original, learned, careful. The book before us is none of these. It is derivative, large sections of it merely parroting the anti-Freudian animus of such dubious figures as H.J. Eysenck; it is far from learned, basing itself upon an inadequate grasp of the scholarship; and it is as reckless as a book can be. □

Arnold Beichman, a political scientist, is the author of Nine Lies About America.

*It is worth contrasting Stannard's either/or method with Clifford Geertz's deft and delicate probing of the same issues in the second chapter of *The Interpretation of Cultures.*

THE WINDING PASSAGE: ESSAYS AND SOCIOLOGICAL JOURNEYS 1960-1980

Daniel Bell / ABT Books / $25.00

Arnold Beichman

Daniel Bell opens this collection of his "middle of the journey" essays with a strange confession: "These are the essays of a prodigal son . . . seeking a return to the straight way of my ancestors."

According to an affecting memoir in the book about his Jewish identity, Bell's ancestors are the Hebrew prophets, not St. Luke, who set down the parable of Jesus. Nor having known Bell for some years would I, or anyone else who has known him, make the accusation that he has "wasted his substance with riotous living." On the contrary, he has invested his substance in rare classical engravings and, more importantly, his time and intelligence in thinking and writing about American society and the post-industrial age. Yet if Bell still insists on his prodigal filiation, I, as a surrogate father, will welcome him with this review as the fatted calf.

Although all the essays in this book have had prior publication, they deserve re-reading or publication in book form because they show the intellectual maturation of one of our keenest social philosophers. Bell is a sociologist, a leader in his profession, and one of the adornments of the Harvard faculty. But like his great precursors—Weber, Durkheim, Pareto, Parsons, and Aron—he is more than that; he is also a great preacher seeking to understand purpose and design in a universe dominated by Man, the unpredictable.

Bell's essays fall into two categories. The first consists of superb explications of our present condition such as "Ethnicity and Social Change" or "Beyond Modernism, Beyond Self." The second contains polemical exercises such as "Vulgar Sociology" and "The Once and Future Marx"; the former, an attack on C. Wright Mills, the latter, a demolition job on Michael Harrington, and an obituary for a defunct ideology.

In "Modernism and Capitalism," an essay which preceded publication of *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism,* Bell spelled out his belief structure—"I am a socialist in economics, a liberal in politics, and a conservative in culture." A few years ago, Bell wrote that "the death of socialism is the unrealized fact of this century." I cannot believe that Bell remains a socialist, but that he remains a liberal in politics and a conservative in culture is quite evident from these essays. →

SAVE YOUR GAS! BEAT INFLATION!
Roam the world 1st class by freighter or cruise ship at tremendous savings!
TravLtips
Dept. F111, 163-09 Depot, Flushing, NY 11358

Available from
Sherwood Sugden & Company
Publishers of Catholic Books
1117-K Eighth St., La Salle, IL 61301

☐ *Escape from Scepticism: Liberal Education as if Truth Mattered* by **Christopher Derrick**—2.95; ☐ *Joy Without a Cause: Selected Essays of Christopher Derrick*—4.95; ☐ *Dynamics of World History* by **Christopher Dawson**—7.95; ☐ *Christianity in East and West* by **Christopher Dawson**—4.95; ☐ *Citizen of Rome: Reflections from the Life of a Roman Catholic* by **Frederick D. Wilhelmsen**—5.95; ☐ *The Impatience of Job* by **George W. Rutler**—3.95. (*All prices include postage.*)

Changing Your Address?

Please attach the address label from the *most recent* issue of your *American Spectator* in the space below. Print your new address and mail this form to *The American Spectator.* When writing to us about your subscription, always attach your address label or print your name and address exactly as they appear on your address label. Be sure to include the line of information above your name.

(*Please attach address label here.*)

(please print)
Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Date of change _____ X91

☐ Please renew my subscription for one year (twelve issues—$15).
☐ Payment enclosed
☐ Please bill me

IMPORTANT: Allow six weeks for address change.

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR
Circulation Department
P.O. Box 1969
Bloomington, Indiana 47402

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bell's underlying theme, which threads many of these 17 essays, is how post-modernism and the "new sensibility" brought the democracies to heel. The intellectual bridges to the post-modernist age are Marx and Freud. Its representative figures, Norman O. Brown and Michel Foucault, have "pressed the logic of modernism towards its most radical theoretical conclusions" intellectually, while "sociologically they have sounded a note which became expressed by the cultural mass, and in more extreme form by the porno-pop culture of the day." This theme evolves from Bell's earlier view of the older, radical tradition which "intellectually and esthetically" accepts the premises of modernism. A decade ago he singled out Philip Rahv, Robert Brustein, Lionel Abel, and Irving Howe as the allies of modernism whose semi-literate campus epigones of the late sixties and seventies had merely carried out "the premises of modernism through to their logical conclusions." In other words, the "new sensibility" became intertwined with political radicalism, a phenomenon unintended by these older intellectuals.

It is not the first time in contemporary history that the pupil has outdistanced the teacher. Theodor Adorno of the Frankfurt School (which gave America Herbert Marcuse) was once heard to complain that his writings and lectures had sought to create nothing more than a theoretical methodology: "How was I to know that they would try to realize it with Molotov cocktails?" Had he and other intellectuals read or remembered Tocqueville's essay in *The Old Regime and the French Revolution* ("How towards the middle of the eighteenth century men of letters took the lead in politics and the consequences of this new development"), the last decade might have been quite different.

As I read Bell's critique of these "modernist" intellectuals who ignored dissenting voices, I was reminded of Sganarelle in Molière's *Le Médecin Malgré Lui*, the fake doctor who insisted that the heart was on the right side. When he was told that the heart is usually on the left, he replied in a famous line, "We have changed all that." The latter-day Sganarelles have sought to subvert high culture—"in its radical extension of self"—in order to destroy the individualism of bourgeois life. The capitalist system, says Bell, has also contributed to the destruction of traditional bourgeois life ("of sobriety and delayed gratification") by the furious promotion "of hedonism and pornotopia." I think Bell ignores here the powerful influence of the Bill of Rights, particularly the right to freedom of expression, without which the capitalist system could not promote "hedonism and pornotopia."

While it may be true that capitalism "creates no values of its own," it has learned to accept the values which a modern democratic state creates, even though those very values may destroy the system. For as Schumpeter wrote: "Unlike any other type of society, capitalism inevitably and by virtue of the very logic of its civilization creates, educates and subsidizes a vested interest in social unrest." More disturbing, given the breakdown of traditional values in Western society, has been, as Bell argues, the concomitant disappearance of "the idea of shame, and the reduction of the idea of guilt, as a regulator of moral conduct."

The schema of these essays has a logic which successfully leads to the last paper in the book, titled "The Return of the Sacred? The Argument on the Future of Religion." It is the Hobhouse Memorial lecture Bell delivered at the London School of Economics. All the earlier essays—the critique of technology, Marxism, the intellegentsia in American society, liberalism, modernism, Jewish identity—are subsumed by Bell's concern with the secularization and profanation of modern life which, in the name of modernity, has led to "a turning away from the authority of the past, the shrinking of the realm of the sacred and the Faustian quest for total knowledge. . . ."

The disenchantment with traditional religion has evoked alternative responses as a substitute: rationalism, existentialism, civil religions, political religions, and estheticism (which Bell defines as "the belief that it was the task of art to gratify the subterranean demands of human impulse which religion had not been able wholly to exorcise"). Bell believes that a long era of disbelief in the sacred is coming to a close because of the exhaustion of modernism, the aridity of Communist life, and the tedium of the "unrestrained self." The theme of modernism was the word "beyond"—beyond nature, beyond culture, beyond tragedy. The key word in the post-modern age seems to be "limits"—a limit to growth, a limit to arms, to torture, to hubris, and a limit to spoliation of the environment. With this sense of limits may come, Bell predicts, new religions which will not be cultist, romantic, or depend on "the involuted self." The new transcendency will seek "a resurrection of memory," will search for continuity, and fight for the reinstatement of a private sphere as against "the megastructures of organization."

There is much, much more to discuss in this volume, the latest in what might be called "The Continuing Education of Daniel Bell." Reading him recalls Thomas Henry Huxley's comment after he read Darwin's *Origin of Species:* "The only thing I don't understand about the theory of evolution is why didn't I think of it myself." □

SAUL BELLOW: DRUMLIN WOODCHUCK

Mark Harris / University of Georgia Press / $9.95

John Podhoretz

It is certainly only natural for a minor writer to envy a major writer; and it is also only natural to see such envy expressed in the sort of excessively virulent criticism and attack so hostile that only one of the seven deadly sins could have prompted it. What is unusual, quite unusual indeed, is to see this kind of overbearing and ill-motivated hatred expressed in terms of praise and even of adulation. It is this second kind of literary and personal envy that informs every page of Mark Harris's *Saul Bellow: Drumlin Woodchuck* (the title comes from a Robert Frost poem), a book so filled with loathing for its titular subject that one can only feel sorry for Harris as he vainly attempts to prove to his reader his never-ending admiration for Bellow's work. Harris, author of a few baseball novels and a writer held in some small repute twenty or so years ago, wishes to be Bellow's Boswell. Boswell, however, never seemed to share Harris's unspoken but all-too-clear desire to do his subject in.

The book chronicles Harris's attempt to become Bellow's authorized biographer; after having "learned" so much from Bellow's work, Harris now wants to get the man on paper for the ages. An acquaintance, correspondent, and sometime sycophant of Bellow's, Harris had encountered Bellow five or six times in person before the fateful day of March 23, 1966, when he arrives in Chicago to ask for Bellow's permission and cooperation (he had received no reply to a letter he had written). We know of this date, and of the fact that Harris stayed that weekend at the Del Prado Hotel in Hyde Park, because Harris is an obsessive diarist; by 1967, he tells us, he had filed more than a million words away in diaries first begun in 1934. "He won't say No," their mutual friend Richard Stern tells Harris, but, as becomes clear, Bellow won't say Yes either. (In gratitude for Stern's support, Harris both dedicates the book to him and even has gone so far in a recent *New Republic* to describe a Stern short story as perhaps the best in the English language.) Using his overflowing diary, Harris relates every detail of that weekend to us, from the kind of steak Bellow was eating to the number of phone calls Bellow makes to Stern's house on Saturday afternoon. Harris is offended by Bellow's unspoken but evident "displeasure" with Harris's hippie daughter Hester, but is even more offended when Bellow leaves a party that the two attended together without him: Bellow's explanation, that he thought Harris wanted some romantic time alone with the hostess, falls on deaf ears. Harris does manage to restrain himself from making a play for the hostess, but does instead go after Bellow's ex-wife Susan, who regretfully turns him down.

The years go by: Harris writes

John Podhoretz is editor of Counterpoint *and film critic of* The American Spectator.

If You Love Words, you'll love **VERBATIM.** The Language Quarterly dealing with all aspects of language. Send $7.50 (U.S.) or $8.50 (elsewhere) for a 1-year subscription, starting with the current issue. Money back if not pleased. Allow 6 weeks.
VERBATIM POST OFFICE BOX 668 AS ESSEX, CT 06426 U S A

Grin and Wear It! Cheshire Cat, Alice in Wonderland, White Rabbit, Sherlock Holmes, Beethoven, Bach, Wagner, Cezanne, Van Gogh, Einstein, Freud, Jung, Kant, Kierkegaard, Schopenhauer, T.S. Eliot, Mann, Steinbeck, Austen, Virginia Woolf, Elizabeth I, Joan of Arc, St. Nick and Scrooge. Catalogue 75. Sizes S, M, L, XL. T Shirts (white, red, or light blue) $10. ea. 4 $32. Sweatshirts (grey) $16. 2 $26. Nightshirts (red or light blue) $13. 2 $22. Totes $12. 2 $22. Aprons $11. 2 $18. Calendars (cloth) $10. 2 $18. Shipping .75 per piece. Foreign remit in U.S. dollars. **Historical Products**, Box 220AS, Cambridge, MA 02238.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bellow; no reply. Bellow is cool to Harris on the telephone. Harris moves from a post at San Francisco State University to another at Purdue University. Harris writes Bellow; a reply on a postcard. Harris protests American involvement in the Vietnam War; Bellow does not. Richard Stern lives at 4901 South Kimbark. Bellow and Wright Morris suffer a rift in their friendship. Bellow goes to Europe. Harris teaches Bellow's first novel, *Dangling Man,* in a class. Richard Stern and his wife Gay break up. Bellow comes to Purdue to speak, at Harris's request; when there, the two go to an antique shop together. Harris is upset by Bellow's inactivity against the Vietnam War and by his stand against the college protestors. Bellow brings a girl to Purdue with him, with whom he stays in one room at the Union. And on and on.

Rarely has a less successful and less interesting acquaintanceship been described in such blizzards of tedious detail. Bellow seems not to like Harris very much, and for what appears to be good reason. Yet Harris, ever effusive about Bellow's novels, must not have made all that unappealing a companion for the great man; who, after all, can resist someone who can quote you chapter and verse? Little did Bellow know what his sycophant had in store for him in this book.

When Harris relates that Bellow had left for Europe before the publication of *Henderson the Rain King*, he cannot resist quoting the words of a character in Bellow's *Humboldt's Gift:* "So you're going to Europe? Any special reason? Are you on a job? Or just running, as usual? You never go alone, always with some bim. What kind of c--t is taking you this time?" How friendly. Harris sends Bellow a copy of his book, *Twentyone Twice,* then asks if Bellow has read it. "No, he was saving all books of friends to read at a later date." But subsequently Harris learns from Bellow's ex-wife, Susan, that Bellow had left his copy of the book behind:

> I asked whether he had "left it behind" or *didn't intend to take it at all.* The distinction was unimportant to Susan, but she saw that it was important to me.
>
> "What did he tell you?"
>
> "That he was saving friends' books to read later," I replied.
>
> She asked, "What friends?"

to which Harris says nothing; he only writes it down in his diary so that 14 years later we can appreciate, as no doubt he did, Bellow's absolute callousness. A few years later, Bellow expresses discomfort with the title of Harris's latest novel, *The Goy,* but, hypocrite that he is, himself a few hours later uses the word "kike" in a joke. "I was shocked," Harris writes, "to hear Bellow employ such an expression. . . . A small comedy suddenly became serious, full of disturbing implications." Add this to Bellow's refusal to join Harris on the barricades—"It was confusing to me," considers Harris, "that Bellow, who hated guns and war, was never associated with the protest against the war in Vietnam"—and you have a man who, despite his "greatness," is hardly the salt of the earth. Some Johnson for an eager and noble Boswell like Harris.

Harris's astonishing misreading of Bellow's writing ("a political radical," Harris calls him at one point); his fatuousness ("This is a book about a man whose talent expresses hope."); his ability to take everything said about Bellow at face value (bitter ex-wife Susan complains that Bellow is neglectful of their son Daniel, so Harris unquestioningly quotes Bellow's words concerning his character Herzog: "a loving but bad father"); and all that megalomaniacal detail cribbed from his tiresome diary com-

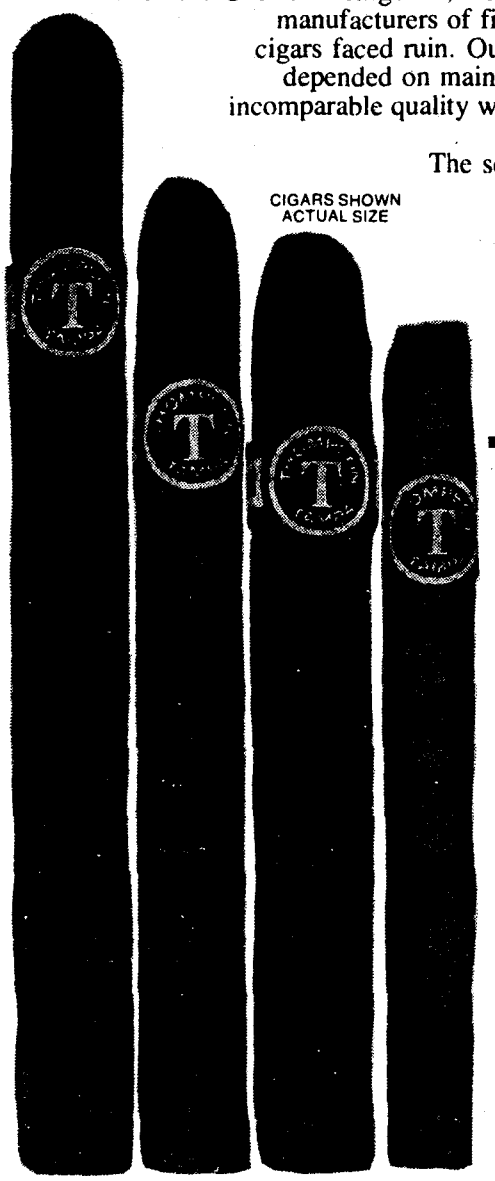
YOU DON'T NEED CASTRO'S PERMISSION TO ENJOY THE UNIQUE HAVANA FLAVOR.

If you remember savoring and lingering over a fantastically mild and flavorful Cuban leaf cigar in the days before the Cuban embargo, you will be interested in this offer — and the story behind it.

When the Cuban embargo hit, we and other small manufacturers of fine custom-made cigars faced ruin. Our very existence depended on maintaining the same incomparable quality we had staked our reputation on.

The solution was pure cloak-and-dagger.

One dark night a few years ago a group of daring Cuban expatriates put to sea carrying a precious cargo of Cuban tobacco seeds. After running a gauntlet of Cuban gunboats they finally reached their destination — Honduras. Here under almost identical conditions of climate and soil, this prime tobacco flourishes to this day, far from its native land. This is the tobacco we use to make our superbly mild and flavorable cigars — cigars an expert can't tell from Havana.



- *"Yours is the only decent cigar I have had in over 12 years," one new customer wrote me the other day.*
- *"Of all the cigars I have smoked, both cheap and expensive, yours is the best of the bunch," wrote another.*
- *"Outstanding! Best cigars I have had since returning from overseas," wrote H.E.O., of Columbia, S.C.*
- *"I am very impressed with the mildness and freshness of the cigar sampler you sent," said J.J.M., of Lincoln, Ill.*

MY OFFER TO CIGAR LOVERS

I will send you postpaid a variety of 50 factory fresh cigars. Smoke one or a half-dozen with my compliments. If these cigars aren't all you expect and a great deal more, return the remainder by parcel post within 30 days and I'll refund your money. No questions asked. Your delivered cost is only $10.90 for 50 Factory-Fresh Cuban Seed Leaf Cigars.

To order, fill in and mail coupon to A537

THOMPSON CIGAR CO.
Dept. A537, 200 N. Edison Ave., Box 1839, Tampa, FL 33601

O.K., TOM! Ship me the Thompson Victory Sampler under your money-back guarantee for only $10.90

☐ Check for $10.90 enclosed. (Fla. residents add 4% sales tax.)

Make Mine with This Wrapper:
☐ Candela (Lt. Green)
☐ Natural (Med. Brown)
☐ Charge $10.90 to my
☐ Visa ☐ Master Charge
☐ American Express
☐ Diners Club

Credit Card No. (Print all digits)

Master Charge Also Enter 4 Digits Below Your Acct. No. EXP. DATE

name

address

city (OFFER GOOD IN U.S. ONLY) state zip

CREDIT CARD USERS SPEED DELIVERY BY PHONING

TOLL-FREE 800-237-2559
IN FLORIDA CALL: 800-282-0646

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bine with his ever-present envy ("my first novel was published in 1946, only two years after Bellow's first novel, *in spite of his being seven years older than I*" [his italics]) to make *Saul Bellow: Drumlin Woodchuck* an unnecessary and even reprehensible book. Bellow, a very intelligent man in addition to being a very, very good writer, knew what he was doing when he did not allow Harris to be his authorized biographer.

The great last sentence of Bellow's best novel, *Mr. Sammler's Planet,* "For that is the truth of it—that we all know, God, that we know, that we know, we know, we know," does not, it seems, apply to Mark Harris, failed biographer and failed important writer. At the end of the book, looking back upon his experience, Harris writes: "I felt myself approaching Bellow's wisdom." Poor Mark Harris doesn't know, doesn't know. □

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE

(*Continued from page 25.*)

Even great Homer sometimes nods, we were told long ago, and so it is with Sidney Hook. Embattled or battling anti-Communists the American labor movement's members clearly were—at least during the lifetime of George Meany; it remains to be seen how resolute their anti-Communism will be in the years immediately ahead under a new leadership with newly won influence for the left-leaning members of the federation. But defenders of "the values of a free society" the AFL-CIO unions are not and never were, not in the palmiest days of the Meany regnum.

George Meany often benefitted by the sloppy tendency to confuse his political anti-Communism with (what everybody assumed was a corollary of) a staunchly pro-capitalism/free market/free society stance. That corollary simply did not carry. Meany's economics and his domestic politics were of a "resolute" *socialist* stripe. Given a choice between government intervention and a market solution, he would tout the former every time; indeed, not long before his death (when the present tide toward recognizing the role of business in resuscitating a sick economy was just beginning to rise), Meany loudly opted for a "public jobs" program, rather than for tax relief for business and creation of jobs by the market mechanism.

His (and the AFL-CIO's) abhorrence of any attempt to moderate (much less repeal) the minimum wage laws, in the effort to make unskilled workers—particularly teenagers—more employable, was constant, unvarying, and effective.

Indeed, Organized Labor, in its modern and powerful heyday, has never been willing to submit its case to the marketplace—either forensic or economic. On the contrary, it has consistently sought and regularly achieved immunity and insulation from market forces, whether it was engaged in organizing or bargaining.

When, many years ago, Professor Hook perceived Communism for what it is, he promptly and courageously abandoned its defense and, in doing so, he earned our eternal respect and gratitude, for he became one of our most dedicated defenders of freedom. Is it not time that he similarly allowed the scales to drop from his eyes concerning the economic and the political colossus that is Organized Labor? He seems still to view it through the misty, sentimental eyes of his youth. But, if that vision of Labor-as-Hero ever had validity, it has long since disappeared in impressive demonstrations of the economic power to crush economic opponents and the political power to work its will. As a dedicated champion of freedom, Professor Hook, I submit, if he is to be a *consistent* champion, needs to update his view of Labor in the cold light of those facts, rather than continuing to view it in the warm glow of youthful sentiment.

—Frank O'Connell
Aptos, California

An Inordinate Fear of Labor? II

In a spirited review of Norman Podhoretz's *The Present Danger,* Sidney Hook makes an assertion that is half-truth and half-fiction. He wishes us to believe that "the most embattled defenders" of the West in its struggle against "the expansion of Soviet totalitarianism have not been free-market fetishists, libertarians, and other representatives of theological and economic fundamentalism but the members of the organized labor movement of the United States—the AFL-CIO." Even making allowances for the unprofessional sneers at religious traditionalists and defenders of the free market, Hook's statement has only limited historical accuracy. Admittedly, George Meany was a fervently anti-Communist labor leader, but it might be difficult to prove the same for Walter Reuther or for many of the current Democratic Party loyalists in the AFL-CIO.

As for free marketeers and conspicuously religious Americans, Hook unfairly identifies them collectively with isolationist politics. Most religious traditionalists are, and have been, vigorously anti-Communist, which is one of the overriding reasons that leftist intellectuals abuse them. If economic libertarians like Murray Rothbard, moreover, have joined with McGovernite isolationists in deploring the Cold War, such a stand is still seen as idosyncratic and distressing by most of the American Right. The classical liberals, both here and in Europe, who have opposed Communist expansion—e.g. Barry Goldwater, William Buckley, Friedrich Hayek, Ludwig Erhard, Wilhelm Röpke, and Margaret Thatcher—have been more numerous and influential.

Hook is of course right in suggesting that American conservatives have not always advocated resistance to Soviet aggression. This was particularly true in the mid- and even late forties, when the isolationist impulse still survived in such otherwise splendid defenders of freedom as Hoover and Taft. Hook reminds us that—even in spite of Winpisinger, Woodcock, and Fraser—the mainstream of American organized labor has a decent record of fighting Communism.

By all means let's not smear anti-Communist labor leaders. But let's also not rewrite the recent past to satisfy anyone's pet peeves.

—Paul Gottfried
Dept. of History
Rockford College
Rockford, Illinois

Sidney Hook replies:

I can hardly do justice to the theme raised by these letters in a few lines. With respect to Professor Gottfried's communication, I am far from desiring "to rewrite history," nor have I a "peeve" against American corporations eager to do business with the Soviet Union regardless of its consequences in strengthening the military and economic potential of the Soviet Union. My charge is much more serious. They are betraying the ideals of a free society as I understand them. I felt the same way about corporations that did a thriving business with Japan and Nazi Germany in the mid-thirties when their threat to the free world was clear. The scrap metal we sold to them came back to us in the form of shot and shell. *Trade only in non-essentials under rigorous controls should be the rule.*

Of course I am not impugning the loyalty to the ideals of a free society of all American corporations; nor am I absolving all American trade unions

There is opportunity in America!

Sarkes Tarzian Inc. Bloomington, Indiana

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or trade-union leaders from guilt in collaborating with the Soviet Union by furthering causes that undermine the defenses of a free society. But I submit that the historical record is overwhelmingly clear. The foreign policy positions of organized labor in the United States have been more consistently opposed to Communism than those of the churches, the universities, the press, the media, the business establishments, and all other segments of American society. And I believe this holds true of the large unions not affiliated with the AFL-CIO.

Mr. O'Connell's letter epitomizes the basic confusion of a very influential conservative school of thought. To him and to it a free society is equivalent to a free market economy or, to put it differently, a free market economy is a *sufficient* condition of a free society. To those of us who put freedom first, a free society is one in which the citizens are *free to choose* the economic system under which they wish to live (as well as the other institutions of society). This freedom of choice presupposes a functioning system of basic civil rights. In a free society various degrees of economic freedom and control are possible. We are no less free today (it can be argued that politically and culturally we are much more free) although the market is far less free, than we were in 1890, the halcyon days of free enterprise. Freedom of association, of which trade unionism is one expression, is integral to a free society. Where there are no free trade unions, without the right to strike, we have a system of forced labor.

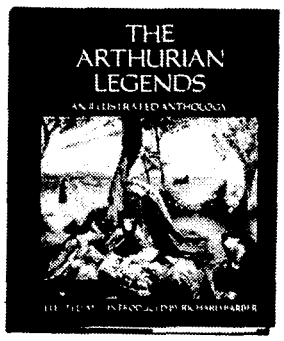
Here is not the place to discuss the many uses and abuses of trade unionism. Suffice it to say that if Mr. O'Connell indicts leaders of the labor movement as principled enemies of the free society, as he defines it, because of the restrictive effects of some trade union practices on the free market, he must also indict every industrialist who has ever favored a tariff or lobbied for a subsidy as an enemy of the free society. This indicates the inadequacy and intellectual poverty of his definition of a free society. (I take the liberty of referring him to my *Political Power and Personal Freedom* and my *Philosophy and Public Policy* for an alternative approach.)

I conclude with a reassertion of my position. The American labor movement never subscribed to the illusion harbored by Western statesmen from Lloyd George to Nixon and Kissinger that expanded trade with the Soviet Union would guarantee peace and strengthen the defenses of the free world. Indeed, the Soviet Union owes as much to the technology and industry of the West in developing its economy as to its own efforts. I do not share the *Weltanschauung* of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn or vouch for the literal historical accuracy of his quotations, but the insight he expressed in his memorable address before the AFL-CIO on June 30, 1975, after President Ford on the advice of Henry Kissinger refused to receive him, remains valid:

> Lenin, who spent most of his life in the West and not in Russia, who knew the West much better than Russia, always wrote and said that the Western capitalists would do anything to strengthen the economy of the USSR. They will compete with each other to sell us goods cheaper and sell them quicker so that the Soviets will buy from one rather than another. He said: they will bring it themselves without thinking about their future. And, in a difficult moment, at a party meeting in Moscow, he said: "Comrades, don't panic, when things go very hard for us, we will give a rope to the bourgeoisie, and the bourgeoisie will hang itself."
>
> Then Karl Radek, who was a very resourceful wit, said: "Vladimir Ilyich, but where are we going to get enough rope to hang the whole bourgeoisie?" Lenin effortlessly replied: "They'll supply us with it!" □

Does anyone out there want to save money on history books?

(First price is publisher's list. **Boldface** shows member's price.)



8656. **The Arthurian Legends: An Illustrated Anthology.** *Selected and introduced by Richard Barber.* Explores the influence of the Arthurian romance as interpreted through the ages. $19.50/**$13.95**

2162. **Fire and Water: A Life of Peter the Great.** *By Alex de Jonge.* One of the world's most flamboyant rulers—one of history's most extraordinary stories. $12.95/**$9.50**

8284. **The Devil's Horsemen: The Mongol Invasion of Europe.** *By James Chambers.* $11.95/**$8.95**

8870. **The Battle For Gaul.** *By Julius Caesar. Translated by Anne and Peter Wiseman.* $15.95/**$11.50**

8953. **Crispin's Day: The Glory of Agincourt.** *By Rosemary Hawley Jarman.* The vivid medieval drama of Henry V's most famed campaign against the French. $15.00/**$10.95**

2519. **John D.: The Founding Father of the Rockefellers.** *By David Freeman Hawke.* $12.95/**$9.95**

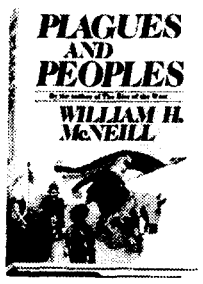
7518. **Antietam: The Photographic Legacy of America's Bloodiest Day.** *By William A. Frassanito.* $15.95/**$10.25**

2956. **Germany: 1866-1945.** *By Gordon Craig.* $22.50/**$14.50**

7765. **Richard the Lionheart.** *By John Gillingham.* Seen from a new perspective, this legendary king emerges as one of the ablest monarchs ever to sit on the British Throne. $12.50/**$8.50**

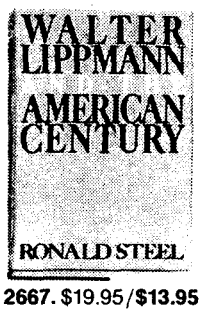
8250. **Babylon.** *By Joan Oates* $16.95/**$10.95**

2279. $14.95/**$10.50**



5207. $10.00/**$7.75**

2428. $24.00/**$14.00**



2667. $19.95/**$13.95**

Consider how much you're spending to read the books you enjoy. Then, consider the alternative.

The History Book Club.

Last year, our members saved an average of 33% off publishers' prices on a variety of books, covering the entire history of man.

And to introduce you to the Club, we have an offer that can save you even more.

Shop this page. We'll send you any three of the books listed here (worth up to $74.00) for just 99¢. Plus a fourth at the low member's price. Just compare our member's prices to the publisher's prices listed below.

You need take only four more books in the next twelve months. After which you'll save even more on bonus books you may choose from our entire list. In your first year, your total savings, including this introductory offer, can be more than 50%.

You can count on getting the best new titles in the same kind of editions you'd find in bookstores. All at savings of $3, $4, $5 (and more), off bookstore prices.

Any three books for 99¢ with trial membership.

Membership Benefits. A membership account will be opened for you, to which your purchases will be charged at the low member's prices. You need pay only after you have received your books. A postage-and-packing fee is added to each shipment.

Every four weeks (13 times a year) you will receive our *Review* containing descriptions of new and recent selections. If you want the Editors' Choice, do nothing; it will be sent automatically. If you want another book, or no book at all, return the card by the date specified. If you should receive an unwanted book because you had less than ten days to decide, you may return it and pay nothing. We guarantee postage.

ND81A

The History Book Club
Stamford, Conn. 06904

Please enroll me as a trial member and send me the four books whose numbers I have entered below. Bill those on the left at 99¢ for all three and the fourth at the low member's price, plus postage-and-packing.

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

I may return the books within three weeks at your expense and owe nothing. Or I will buy four more selections within a year (*not counting my choices above*). Membership is cancellable any time thereafter. All Club purchases are at low member's prices and a postage-and-packing fee is added to all shipments.

AQ-02S

Print Name

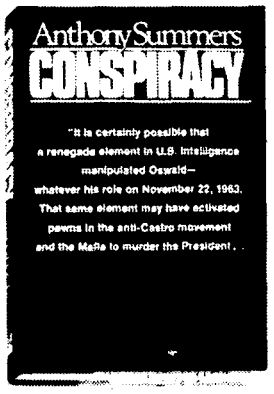
Address Apt. #

City

State Zip

In Canada mail to The History Book Club, 16 Overlea Blvd., Toronto M4H 1A6 Ontario

3244. **Alexander the Great.** *By Robin Lane Fox.* $15.00/**$9.95**


Anthony Summers
CONSPIRACY
"It is certainly possible that a renegade element in U.S. Intelligence manipulated Oswald— whatever his role on November 22, 1963. That same element may have activated pawns in the anti-Castro movement and the Mafia to murder the President. . .

2659. **Conspiracy.** *By Anthony Summers.* A chilling report of gripping interest to anyone who remembers November 22, 1963. $17.95/**$12.50**

8813. **Final Journey: The Fate of the Jews in Nazi Europe.** *By Martin Gilbert.* $12.95/**$9.50**

1875. **The World of the Huns: Studies in Their History and Culture.** *By Otto Maenchen-Helfen.* $25.00/**$16.00**

4143. **Russia Under the Old Regime.** *By Richard Pipes.* The first thorough analysis of the growth of the Russian state—from the ninth century to the 1800's. $17.50/**$10.95**

4648. **The Twelve Caesars.** *By Michael Grant.* $12.50/**$8.75**

4788. **China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture.** *By Charles O Hucker.* $17.50/**$11.95**

7849. **The Napoleonic Wars: An Illustrated History, 1792-1815.** *By Michael Glover.* $22.50/**$12.95**

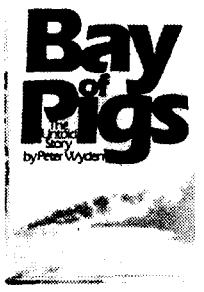
5462. **The Celts: The People Who Came Out of the Darkness.** *By Gerhard Herm.* $12.50/**$8.50**

7286. **A Distant Mirror.** *By Barbara Tuchman.* $15.95/**$9.95**

7583. **The Great Mutiny: India 1857.** *By Christopher Hibbert.* The dramatic story of the bloody uprisings aimed at restoring India's Mogul Past. $15.95/**$9.95**

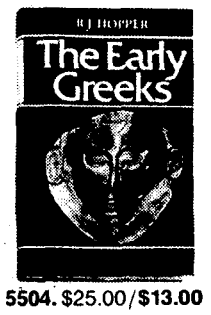
7625. **The Hundred Years War: The English in France, 1337-1453.** *By Desmond Seward.* $11.95/**$8.95**

7401. $17.50/**$11.50**



8508. $12.95/**$8.95**

8797. $12.95/**$9.50**



5504. $25.00/**$13.00**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CURRENT WISDOM

The Great Books Series

The quality of charlatanry in the historian's realm, as manifest by Professor Howard Zinn in the following explanation of American stability:

How skillful to tax the middle class to pay for the relief of the poor, building resentment on top of humiliation! How adroit to bus poor black youngsters into poor white neighborhoods, in a violent exchange of impoverished schools, while the schools of the rich remain untouched and the wealth of the nation, doled out carefully where children need free milk, is drained for billion-dollar aircraft carriers. How ingenious to meet the demands of blacks and women for equality by giving them small special benefits, and setting them in competition with everyone else for jobs made scarce by an irrational, wasteful system. . . .

And from the same numinous source, Professor Zinn's jackass conclusion:

The society's levers of powers would have to be taken away from those whose drives have led to the present state—the giant corporations, the military, and their politician collaborators. We would need . . . . to reconstruct the economy for both efficiency and justice, producing in a cooperative way what people need most. . . . Everyone could share the routine but necessary jobs for a few hours a day, and leave most of the time free for enjoyment, creativity, labors of love, and yet produce enough for an equal and ample distribution of goods. Certain basic things would be abundant enough to be taken out of the money system and be available —free—to everyone: food, housing, health care, education, transportation.

A People's History of the United States
by Howard Zinn
[*Harper & Row, 1980*]

Vegetarian Times

James Mason, author of the classic *Animal Factories* and contributing editor for Animal Issues for *Vegetarian Times,* offers more profound commentary from the salad bar:

The circus, like the zoo, is a relic of a culture alienated from the natural world. We have conquered nature and, in doing so, we suffer from the divorcement, the estrangement that separates the conqueror from the conquered.

[*Issue 41*]

The Miami Herald

Professor Jeremy Rifkin, Director of the People's Business Commission, hands down a shapely declaration on behalf of the Stone Age:

To my mind, genetic engineering represents the last gap of the technological fix that has so threatened our world's environment. Just one more layer of technology, we are told again and again, and everything will work out. But does it make more sense to develop new life forms to degrade oil spills, or to stop transporting petroleum in giant supertankers that can barely be steered in storms, and are thus susceptible to running aground? Does it make more sense to develop novel organisms that might produce new sources of energy as Standard Oil and others hope, or to get away from our energy-consumption fetish through conservation and development of lifestyles of voluntary simplicity?

[*June 24, 1980*]

The Times Literary Supplement

During an encomiastic review of Edmund White's important study, *States of Desire: Travels in Gay America,* the eminent novelist, Paul Baily, pauses to indulge an epagogic interlude, uplifting to us all:

He is splendidly and necessarily critical of those of his own kind who, in the service of a dubious masculinity, accuse the effeminate of betraying the gay cause. Their bogus butchness he regards with dismay—that aggressive hairiness, that determined maleness, has little to do with being a man. Men can afford to be feminine, to be vulnerable. They do not have to be seen, as it were, displaying their credentials. They do not need to flex imaginary muscles.

[*September 5, 1980*]

The New York Review of Books

Professor Sheldon S. Wolin, professor of politics at Princeton University, exposes the United States for the plutocracy that it undoubtedly is:

As the history of the Democratic Party of the last fifty years shows, liberalism has taught corporate capitalism that social welfare is a cheap price to pay. It produced a scapegoat population whose feckless existence distracts attention from the fact that power, wealth, and knowledge are squarely in the hands of the few.

[*December 18, 1980*]

Conservative Digest

Conservative egghead Richard Weaver has his time-honored apothegm, "ideas have consequences," thumpingly debunked by Dr. Viguerie:

Frankly, the conservative movement is where it is today because of direct mail. Without direct mail, there would be no effective counter-force to liberalism, and certainly there would be no New Right.

. . . Without the mail, most conservative activity would wither and die.

[*October, 1980*]

Womansource

What it means to be "woman" in America, as divulged in *Womansource,* a new-age journal of cerebral pother:

MIAMI: A phantom physician that Dade County officials call "Dr. Upchuck" has called over 200 women in the Miami area with phony medical advice. In every case, the "doctor" has called a woman who was recovering from surgery at one of a dozen area hospitals. The caller, sometimes using the name of a physician familiar to the woman, tells the woman to drink two glasses of water, then stick her finger down her throat and force herself to vomit. Many of the women have followed the advice. "Dr. Upchuck" is familiar with his victims' cases so much so that he had to have had access to their confidential records. Hospital officials in Dade County fear that the mystery doctor may eventually kill a woman who follows his advice by their asphyxiating on vomit, or splitting sutures.

[*March 19, 1980*]

People

The Rt. Hon. Lowell Weicker returns from Cuba, having smoked long and diligently the Castro weed:

The eight-and-a-half-hour encounter left the senator with the impression of "a man of enormous intellect and idealism. Castro's been known to snow people, but he didn't snow me," Weicker says. "We flew all over the place and I saw what he's done with my own eyes. They deliver a quality of life to those people they've never known before. By Caribbean and South American standards, it's Park Avenue. I want to know why the U.S. isn't there. We can gain the affection of the Cuban people by working side by side."

To that end, Weicker invited Castro to send scientists to work at the NOAA's research lab in St. Croix and is now urging the agency to exchange scientific publications with the Cubans. "Somebody who's going to play a role in the history of this hemisphere is somebody we should be talking to," he reasons. "Castro is there to stay."

[*November 10, 1980*]

The Boston Globe

Another mystery communique from Dr. George Wald, Nobel Laureate:

The truth is, what one really needs is not Nobel Laureates, but love. How do you think one gets to be a Nobel Laureate? Wanting love, that's how. Wanting it so bad one works all the time, and ends up a Nobel Laureate. It's a Consolation Prize.

What matters is love. Forget sperm banks and egg banks. Banks and love are incompatible. If you don't know that, you don't know bankers.

So just practice loving. Love a Russian. You'll be surprised how easy it is, and how it will brighten your life. Love whales. Love an Iranian, a Vietnamese—not just here, but there. Then, when you've gotten real good at it, try something hard. Try loving one of those candidates for President.

[*October 6, 1980*]

The Progressive

Sunny prospects for all corpulent cats from another of the Albanian-trained economists employed by *The Progressive* to keep an eye on the latest sales figures of the Cadillac division of General Motors:

Conventional wisdom has it that market manipulators always predict where the economy will be in five or six months, and make their investment decisions accordingly. These gurus foresee boom times coming early in 1981. They recognize, as one leading financier recently remarked, that the Presidential election campaign "will see a horserace between the major parties to see which can do more to deflate the economy and generate more vigorous growth via private sector incentives." Translated into language we all can understand, this means both parties will throw Americans out of work and give more tax breaks to the wealthy.

[*October, 1980*]

The San Francisco Examiner

The scientific observations of Mr. Harry Britt, a venerated member of San Francisco's Board of Supervisors, as proffered by columnist Jeff Jarvis:

SEXUAL ENERGY: Supe Harry Britt, San Francisco's "openly gay elected official," addressed a gay rights rally at Stanford yesterday, and the talk turned to energy.

"Although I can't articulate it, I know it's true," Harry said, that there's something about nuclear power—"knowing that eventually it can go boom"—that makes it "profoundly male and profoundly sexist."

Solar energy, on the other hand, is "very loving, very human, very female, and may I say, very gay."

[*April 30, 1980*]

The Nation

The learned Kurt Vonnegut speaks of his customers:

The most horrible hypocrisy or the most terrifying hypocrisy or the most tragic hypocrisy at the center of life, I think, which no one dares mention, is that human beings don't like life. Bertrand Russell skirted that, and many psychoanalysts have too, in talking about people lusting for death. But I think that at least half the people alive, and maybe nine-tenths of them, really do not like this ordeal at all. They pretend to like it some, to smile at strangers, and to get up each morning in order to survive, in order to somehow get through it. But life is, for most people, a very terrible ordeal. They would just as soon end it at any time.

[*August 2-9, 1980*]

The Florida Times Union

Another compassionate elocution from Coretta Scott King on the campaign trail in Jacksonville, Florida, still trying to heal the nation's wounds and to bring us all together into one big republic of love:

Coretta Scott King, campaigning in Jacksonville yesterday for President Carter, said Ronald Reagan's election as president would set the civil rights movement back two decades.

"I feel that with a Republican president this country would move further toward the right and we would move to a fascist state," Mrs. King said. "And I do not think this would be speaking too strongly to say that.

"We will wake up on Nov. 5 and we will be set back 25 years."

[*October 6, 1980*]

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

classified

HELP WANTED

SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER. Challenging career position open for an intelligent, well rounded person with a sense of humor to manage the circulation and business matters of a growing opinion magazine. No experience required. Send resume to: Personnel, American Spectator, Box 1969, Bloomington, IN 47402.

BOOKS

PUBLISH YOUR BOOK! Join our successful authors. Publicity, advertising, beautiful books. All subjects invited. Send for fact-filled booklet and free manuscript report. Carlton Press, Dept. ASS, 84 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

McGUFFEY READERS, replica 1879 edition. Nostalgic set; fine literary selections; engravings. Seven books, hardbound, $29 postpaid. STELLA MARIS BOOKS, Box 5307AS, Waco, TX 76708.

Desire purchase of Latin (Roman) authors —no textbooks please. Send info to: Box G, The American Spectator.

IMPORTERS OVERSTOCKS

BOOK OF WIT AND HUMOR: Get the best of British humor, gags and witticisms in this 370 page, hilariously funny book. A proven companion at socials and speech making.....$7.95

RELIEF FROM ARTHRITIS: Jonh Croft, F.C.S. Book explains how you can get relief from arthritis with a newly tested extract. Paper.....$3.95

DEFEATING DEPRESSION: A Guide for Depressed People and Their Families by C.Watts, O.B.E., M.D. This thoroughly tested book shows you how to deal with and overcome completely various kinds of depression in the family. Possibly the most effective self-help book you can find anywhere..$7.95

To order send check to The BookWise Company, 211 S. Clark, Box A3840, Chicago, IL 60690.

BOOKS

PUBLISHERS' OVERSTOCKS, BARGAIN BOOKS. 2,000 titles, all subjects! Free catalog: Hamilton, 98-74 Clapboard, Danbury, CT 06810.

SCANNER OWNERS! "Top Secret" Registry of U.S. Government Radio Frequencies! Book reveals 15,000+ listings: FBI, Secret Service, Customs, Border Patrol, Immigration, Treasury, FCC, military, etc. $5.95, ppd. CRB Research, Box 56-AS, Commack, NY 11725.

SECRET COMMUNIST AGENTS WHO HAVE CHANGED THE COURSE OF HISTORY by Patrick Walsh. The facts on Hiss, Philby, Sir Anthony Blunt, etc. Send $1 to CIP, Box 130, Flesherton, Ontario, Canada NOC1E0.

PERIODICALS

READ *NEWCOMERS*, The Magazine for the smart set. "Life, literature, criticism, wit." "One intelligent reader is worth 1,000 boneheads." To quote from the cover of George Jean Nathan's (and H.L. Mencken's) first magazine, "The Smart Set." Send $1.50 for a sample issue, or $6.00 for a year's subscription (6 issues) to *Newcomers*, Box 6102, Chicago, IL 60680.

MAGAZINE & NEWSLETTER SAMPLES. . . Only 50 cents each. Over 145 publications, covering a wide range of interests, to choose from. For free descriptive list send a stamped addressed envelope to Publishers Exchange, P.O. Box 1368, Dept. 129A, Plainfield, NJ 07061.

YANKEE HUMOR AND HISTORY. Join the growing family of readers of the Berry Patch Letters, warmly informal sketches of life on a New England Farm. Written by nationally known author, editor, lecturer, William F. Rickenbacker. Monthly. $8 per year. The Berry Patch, Box 158-A West Boxford, Mass. 01885.

PERIODICALS

FREE MAGAZINE featuring 500 books. Health, nutrition, organic gardening, environment, energy. Provoker Press, St. Catharines-578, Ontario, Canada L2R 7C9.

LITERATURE OF LIBERTY. A scholarly journal to keep scholars and students abreast of current research in social sciences, the humanities, law, and philosophy. $12/4 issues. Send order and payment to Literature of Liberty, Dept. A, 1177 University Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

CARIBBEAN-WATCHERS!
Probing, comprehensive coverage of nations in, bordering Caribbean. Monthly newsletter. Special $12 yearly. Samples $1. Caribbean News, 507-G Fifth Avenue, NYC 10017.

THE INDEPENDENT JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY provides an international forum for the exploration of responsible, articulate alternatives to the positivist-analytical, Marxist, and narrowly academicist trends of contemporary philosophy. Subscription—$12.00 (Students, $8.50): 38, rue St.-Louis-en-l'Ile, F-75004S Paris, France.

ACROSTICS—Volumes 2 and 1; new series—25 puzzlers. Spiral-bound. $3.75 each postpaid. DUR-ACROSTICS, Box 61L, Charlevoix, Michigan 49720.

SERVICES

MYERS' professional editing, rewriting, revising, typing. Box 1019, South Pasadena, CA 91030.

PROFESSIONAL EDITING, REWRITE, MORE. Prompt, reasonable. Theo French Edits, P.O. Box 1058, LaMesa, CA 92041.

MERCHANDISE

SURVIVAL FOOD FOR EASTERN SUBSCRIBERS. Buy direct from packer/distributor. Save high freight. Freeze dry/dehyd. Catalog: Stowaway, Independence HiWay, Cohasset, Mass. 02025.

WOODEN NICKELS with your advertising copy, 500 for $24.50; 1,000 only $34.50. 100 different $5.75. Send $1.25 for 15 samples and catalog. Elbee Co., Box 230-AS, San Antonio, TX 78291.

The *CHESTERTON REVIEW* is an international journal of literature. For subscriptions ($8.00 per year) write to: The Chesterton Review, 1437 College Drive, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, S7N 0W6."

CSA and revolutionary Bronze Reliefs. Jane Baxendale, 4114 Sneed, Nashville, TN 37215.

HELP WANTED!
Sow Freedom, plenty and peace with
THE + ONES.
Reap their ample harvests, too. Details $1.00.
Commonsense Books
212 North Road Chelmsford, MA 01824

MISCELLANEOUS

DECOY BOX. Here's an exciting gift for the man on your list—perfect for his office or den. New All-purpose box is made of beautiful rosewood and has a solid brass decoy set on the top. Ideal for storing cigarettes, playing cards, jewelery—just about anything. Box measures 6"x4"x2". Decoy stands 4"x2"x2½". N. 870 Decoy Box $24.95. Sunshine House, 86 Roywood Dr. Don Mills, Ont. Canada, M3A 2E1. Satisfaction guaranteed or money back.

DEFIANT BEETHOVEN T-SHIRT.
World's scowliest portrait with German motto. For obligation-free details: The Planestar Co., Box 146-A, Reseda, CA 91335.

BASIC BIRTH CHARTS—Your very own 8½X11 chart nicely drawn and laminated only $10. Exact time, date, and place of birth required. Astro-Charts, Box 22, Amherst, Ohio 44001.

Join CHICKEN LITTLE CLUB. For free information, write Dept. B, Box 174, Cardiff, CA 92007.

SHOULDN'T YOU BE mildly interested in something that saved your neck eons ago? Spirit a S.A.S.E. to: 4 Way Peace Plan, Box 2243, Youngstown, Ohio, 44504.

Formulas for Best Expression $2.75. M.C. Umbarger, 1204 Churchville Rd., BelAir, MD 21014.

WALKING STICKS, CANES. Free color brochure. Marchele, Dept. *DC*, 1123 Broadway, New York, NY 10010.

GOLD BULLION AND COINS for sale. No sales tax. Cheshire National Bank, 15 Main Street, Keene, NH 03431, (603) 352-5050. (Member FDIC)

NON-TRADITIONAL DOCTORAL PROGRAM. Southeastern University, 5163 DeGaulle Drive, New Orleans, LA 70114.

Are you dismayed by perpetual social disorder? SOCIONOMY can bridge the gap between our social malaise and the humanitarian potential of a social technology. THE LEAGUE OF REASON, Box 327, Patton, CA 92369.

MERCHANDISE

JAPANESE SWORDS WANTED:
Describe and/or photo to H. Chang, 30 East 10th St., New York, NY 10003 (Private).

INFORMATIONAL PAMPHLETS

LAMPS AND VASES! How to make them from bottles? Details $2; Daley, 12AS, Maple Pl., Ossining, NY 10562.

BUMPERSTICKERS & BUTTONS

BUMPERSTICKER 3"x8" "I Don't Brake for Joggers," $2. Krueger, P.O. Box 3428, Santa Barbara, CA 93105.

If guns are outlawed how can we shoot the liberals? • Whatever happened to majority rule? • Fight crime—shoot back • Question authority • bumperstickers, $1.50ea., T-shirts, $5.50ea. State color and size. Minerva, P.O. Box 82047, San Diego, CA 92138.

CLASSIFIED ORDER FORM

You can reach 70,000 informed and interested readers in the classified section of *The American Spectator*. Our rates are only $.50 per word (12-word minimum). Include an additional $3 if you want a box number, and we will forward all inquiries to you once a week. *The American Spectator* reserves the right to reject any copy for any reason. Please specify classification: Help Wanted, Positions Wanted, Opportunities, Services, Books, Periodicals, Informational Pamphlets, Conferences, Bumperstickers & Buttons, Merchandise, Personals, Miscellaneous.

Yes, I would like to place a classified ad in *The American Spectator*, Enclosed is full payment.

..... (# of words) x $.50 x ..... (# of issues ad is to appear) = $.....
(Check enclosed)

Ad classification: ..... Payment must accompany order.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My ad reads:

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

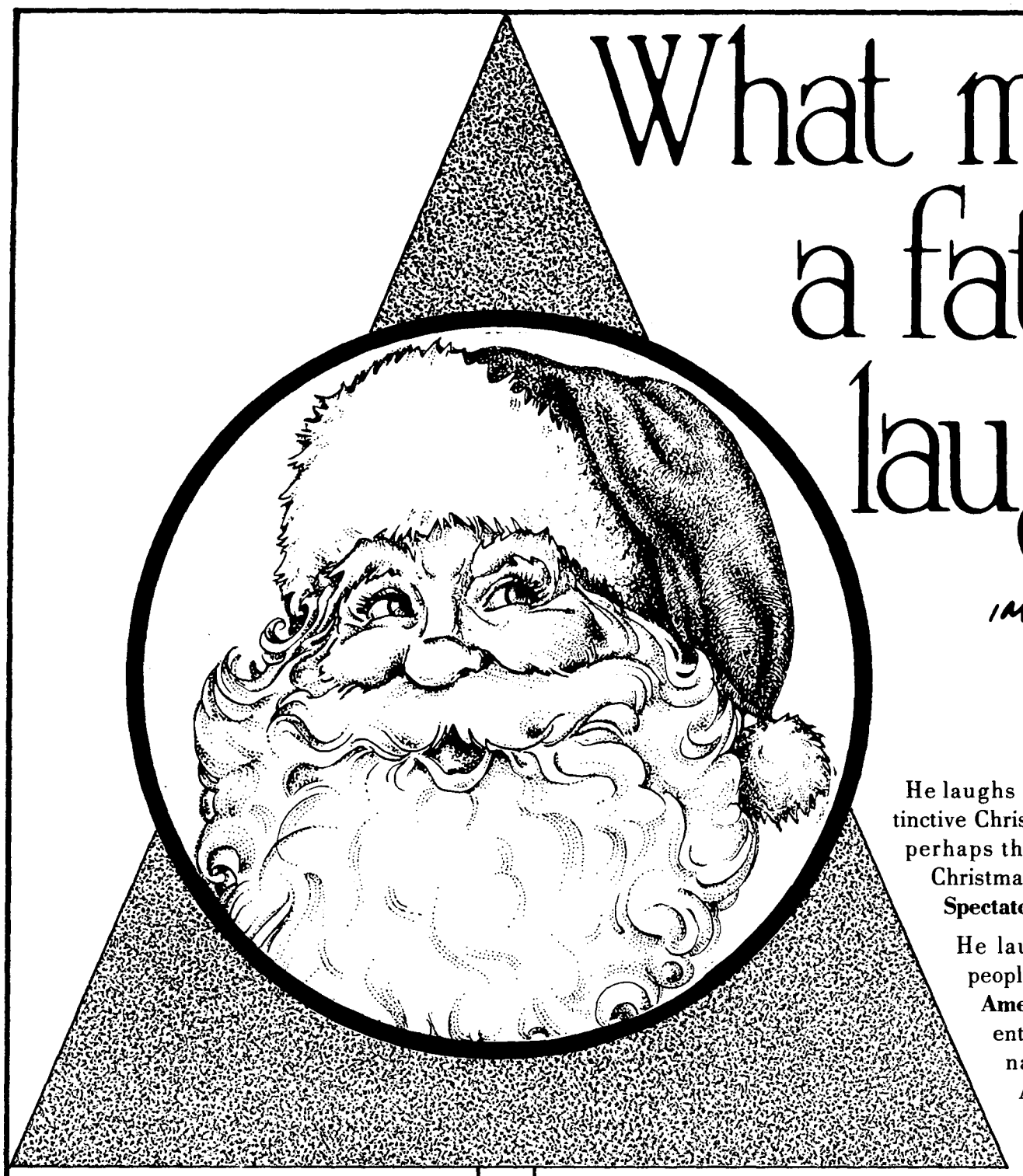
_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Please write additional ads on a separate sheet.

The American Spectator, Classified Dept., P.O. Box 1969, Bloomington, IN 47402

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



What makes a fat man laugh?

(HIS HEART IMPERILED BY GOBS OF CHOLESTEROL)

He laughs because he's just discovered a distinctive Christmas gift that's fit for millions (well, perhaps thousands) of people on his gift list: Christmas gift subscriptions to **The American Spectator.**

He laughs because he knows that many people on his Christmas list will enjoy **The American Spectator**'s cheery and irreverent view of the ignoramuses who dominate cultural and political life in America.

He knows that in addition to its sauciness, **The American Spectator** is a source of sound observations and good writing on economic, political, and cultural topics.

Shouldn't you be laughing too? Just order subscriptions to **The American Spectator** for people on your Christmas list. Spread **The American Spectator**'s cheer and you will be rewarded throughout the year as your friends think of you every time their copy of the magazine arrives.

Order several subscriptions and take advantage of our special discount described below. Just before Christmas, we'll send you a handsome card to announce each gift for mailing during the holiday season.

Send your order now to help us beat the Christmas deadline.

. . . and Happy Holidays!

SPECIAL HOLIDAY OFFER

Now readers of **The American Spectator** can purchase Christmas gift subscriptions at the special rate of only $12 for each one-year gift subscription. This is a saving of $3.00 for each subscription ordered—and your own renewal may be included.

Please send ..... one-year gift subscription(s) at the special rate of only $12 for each gift. I understand that an attractive gift card will be sent to me for mailing to the recipient.

☐ Please include my own renewal.
☐ Payment enclosed.
☐ Bill me later. Total: $.....

THIS OFFER EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 1980
PLEASE PRINT

My name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please send Christmas gift subscription to:

1. Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

★

2. Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

★

3. Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR • P.O. Box 1969 • Bloomington, Indiana 47402

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED